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Paper No. 1 to ~~the Theosophical Society~~

THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: AMERICAN SECTION.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE, P. O. Box 2659.

## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

NEW YORK, JUNE, 1890.

### The Second and Third Objects of the Theosophical Society as Related to the First.

[An address delivered before the Aryan T. S., N. Y., by Mr. B. Keightley.]

**T**HE watchword of every true and earnest member of the Theosophical Society should be *Brotherhood*. This is the true meaning of our motto, "There is No Religion Higher than Truth;" for Truth is One, and to grasp Truth is to lay hold on the essential unity of all Life and Being; in other words, to consciously realize this unity, this universal, all-pervading principle of Brotherhood.

That such is, indeed, the true ideal and purpose of the T. S. is shown by the fact that Universal Brotherhood not only stands first and foremost among its three objects, but is also the only one whose acceptance is obligatory on all who join the ranks of the Society. In spite, however, of repeated declarations to this effect, many people, even within the Society, still regard its first object as an empty name, a mere catchword adopted in order to work on the sentimentality of emotional people, and emphasized in order to give a coloring of universality and non-sectarianism to what many regard as an attempt to found a new religion, or at least to preach a new philosophy. This radical misconception of the purpose and scope of the Theosophical Society has been greatly fostered and augmented by the fact that the attention of the public has been mainly drawn to and centered upon its second and third objects.

The teachings and doctrines of *Theosophy*, though in no sense those of the *Society*, have yet held such a prominent place in its history and absorbed so much of the activity of its members, that they have to a great extent obscured its first and primary purpose. These doctrines, moreover, were so new and strange to the West, they opened up such illimitable fields of thought, they held forth such glorious promise for the future growth and achievement of mankind, that they very naturally came to occupy almost the

entire field of view. To this was added all the force of that tendency, innate in many a human heart, which demands the rest and satisfaction of a formulated creed, an orthodoxy. Few are those strong enough to live in a state of continual growth, of ceaseless mental expansion and change. To the majority, a Society occupying itself with Religion, as does the T. S., *must* have some dogma, secret or avowed, some creed, some final, all-sufficient doctrine. Failing to find this in the simple, noble ideal of human Brotherhood, they sought it in the teachings of Theosophy; and when told that Theosophy *is not* the creed of the Theosophical Society, they exclaimed against an association which therefore seemed to them to be destitute of backbone, so flabby and lacking in consistence. They did not perceive that the only Universal Religion is Universal Brotherhood, and that this ideal excludes by its very nature every form of dogma or orthodoxy from the hearts of those who truly follow its noble teaching.

A second reason which has very largely contributed to distract attention from the ideal of Brotherhood and to obscure the true nature of the Society in the public mind is to be found in the occult or psychic phenomena which have occurred in connection with our work. To discuss these in detail would be beyond the scope of this address; but a few words on their relation to the Society and its work, though of course a digression, may perhaps not be out of place in this connection.

In the opinion of some, the occurrence of such phenomena, and especially the publicity given to them, have been a deplorable mistake. But I am inclined to think otherwise. For first, these phenomena proved experimentally the existence of a world of forces in Nature and man which lie beyond the cognizance of our physical senses, and thus laid a basis upon which to teach the Eastern teachings as to Nature and man; and secondly, they proved that the person who was engaged in bringing these doctrines before the world was possessed of knowledge and power undreamt of by our modern scientists. Now, before devoting time and energy to any study which requires years of hard and persistent labor, every man naturally asks himself whether the teacher whose works he is about to study is a competent instructor in such matters. And apart from the phenomena, I fail to see what other direct evidence *preliminary* to actual study of the subject could have been given on this point. True, the phenomena themselves prove nothing as to the teachings of Theosophy; indeed, there is no logical connection between them and such ideas as Karma, Reincarnation, the law of Cycles, etc. But the phenomena do prove that the person who produced them *has* a deeper acquaintance

with Nature and man than is possessed by any of our present scientific teachers. Hence any thoughtful man is fully warranted in devoting much time and study to her views, with the conviction that his researches are being guided by a competent instructor.

On the other hand, there is no doubt that the *undue* prominence given to these phenomena has in some respects been disadvantageous to the growth of the T. S. They have riveted public attention upon matters of secondary importance, and thrown into the shadow the more important teachings, ethical and spiritual, of Theosophy, as well as at times hidden from view our one great goal—the Brotherhood of Man.

These phenomena properly pertain, of course, to the third object of the Society, and the undue prominence given to them by some persons has fostered an idea which has been fertile in unfortunate consequences; I mean the notion that the T. S. is a school of magic, a hall of occultism, a society in which men may gain power and knowledge for the gratification of their ambition, their vanity, or their curiosity. I propose, therefore, in the following pages to endeavor to show the relations of the second and third objects of the T. S. to the first, and to prove that, instead of our three objects being, as often erroneously supposed, separate, distinct, disconnected, they are in truth intimately and vitally related to each other; the second and third objects of the Society indicating the only lines upon which we may reasonably hope to achieve the ultimate realization of our grand ideal, the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity. We shall better understand the platform of the Theosophical Society if we consider the grounds upon which its Founders based their proclamation of Universal Brotherhood, and then observe how the Society they formed endeavors to realize that ideal.

One of the Founders of the Society had been trained in the noblest and loftiest school of Eastern Wisdom, in whose teachings the doctrine of the essential unity of all Being holds the first, most prominent place. Regarding all "separateness," all consciousness of being apart from the great whole, as illusion, this philosophy, especially when actually realized as a series of facts in consciousness, naturally leads the student to seek this fundamental Unity of All as his first object.

The other Founders were of Western training, the most active and prominent being men who viewed with the utmost apprehension the disintegrating influence of materialistic science, and who earnestly sought for means to combat its advance. They read the lesson of history and saw that Religion was perishing through the religions, whose number, differences, and exclusive claims to the

possession of Truth disgusted the most enlightened men, and caused them to feel that this very conflict between creeds, sects, churches, and dogmas was in itself evidence enough that the Truth dwelt not among them. History shows that no wars have been so bitter as those waged in the name of Religion, that no cause has tended more to separate man from man and people from people than difference of creed; that, finally, no greater obstacle has impeded the search after truth than dogmatic theology, whether in Pagan antiquity or Christian times.

From the association of these two lines of thought arose the conception of a Society whose foundation-stone should be Unity, a Society which should transcend every limitation that human selfishness and folly have imposed upon human thought, a Society which should seek to unite all men in the common search for Truth, by repudiating all dogma, all sectarianism, endeavoring to lay bare the unity of life and so make Religion the saviour, instead of the executioner, of humanity.

From this standpoint, the Brotherhood of Humanity was seen by the Founders to be a *spiritual* fact, the actual reality of Nature; and on this conception they based their declaration of the Society's purpose, and made it the rock upon which their association was founded.

Though such a train of thought as this guided the Founders of the T. S., yet neither their conclusion nor their process of reasoning is the least binding on any man who may join the Society they founded. Still, this view of the Brotherhood of Man as primarily a *spiritual* fact determined the choice of its second and third objects. For the realization of a spiritual fact in Nature could best be achieved through intellectual and ethical study and growth, and hence the leaders of the T. S. have always been engaged in mental rather than physical philosophy. Thus it is at once evident that the task to be undertaken by the Society was to remove religious and sectarian differences, to exhibit and demonstrate the fundamental unity and identity of all creeds. Now the Founder through whom the real impulse and inspiration of the work came, had in the course of her studies become aware of the existence of a body of knowledge, a scientific, coherent, and demonstrated system of facts in Nature, which formed the basis upon which the various world-religions had originally been built. For it must not be forgotten that every religion worthy the name claims to be, and to greater or less extent *is*, a statement of *facts* in nature, just as real and far more important, because more far-reaching, than those which come under the purview of physical science. Moreover, she was in a position to assist very largely in proving the existence

of this common basis and in exhibiting its coherence, its logical character, and its consistency with all our experimental knowledge of the world around us. Thus the task was not an Utopian endeavor, but a practicable undertaking, the goal of which was clear to her eyes and the materials for which lay ready to her hand. And besides this, the Founders were able to count upon the active assistance of many able and learned men of various nationalities. Hence the choice of the second object of the T. S., the study of ancient religions, literatures and philosophies, especially those of the Aryan races, with a view to demonstrating the fundamental identity of all religions.

The importance of this work as a means for promoting brotherly feeling among men is readily apparent. Great confusion has prevailed the world over, but especially in the West, between the ethics of *conduct* and the ethics of *belief*. Men had become accustomed to regard those who differed from themselves in religious belief as morally criminal. Indeed, to many minds it appeared, and even still appears, a far more heinous crime to deny the exclusive divinity of Jesus than to murder, steal, oppress, or commit the most terrible offense against the moral law. Moreover, the narrow view almost universally taken of religion in the West, combined with this confusion of thought, not only resulted in wars and persecutions, but afforded a rich and fertile field for the growth of human selfishness and the development of its worst passions under the cloak of religious zeal. Men were encouraged to deceive themselves, to ignore the fact that there is no intrinsic difference between hatred, revenge, and cruelty when practiced in the name of religion, and the same passions when indulged in for personal gratification.

If, then, men could be brought to higher, purer, and, above all, truer conceptions of Religion as the Universal Truth, perceived by each individual under a different aspect, it is plain that one of the most prolific causes of hatred, strife, and division would be removed from among men, and the way would be smoothed for the growth of brotherly feeling throughout all sections of the human race.

In dealing with the relation of the second object of the Society to the first, while I have only briefly indicated the line of reasoning which can readily be worked out and expanded by each one for himself, I trust that enough has been said to prove their vital and intimate relation, and to show that the second object is one of the most important and appropriate means by which the realization of the first may be attempted.

In making the same attempt as regards our third object, "the

study of unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers of man," a somewhat fuller treatment of the subject will be necessary, especially as a connection is in this case neither so apparent, nor has it been much dwelt upon or explained in current literature. I shall first take the relation of our third object to the first through the second, and then consider its direct bearing upon the first.

Religion, in all its aspects, has been hitherto, notably in the West, almost entirely a matter of faith, either traditional or based upon individual emotional experience. The intellect, and especially the observing faculties, have not had free play, and in consequence there is very little solid, scientifically-demonstrated groundwork to support the vast superstructure that forms the various creeds now held by men. But we have entered upon a time when Reason has become powerful and demands that the emotional and intuitive perceptions which have hitherto been more or less blindly accepted shall be based upon and conform to observed facts. It is the province of Physical Science to record and classify the facts of the physical world, and to build upon them generalizations which, when fully established, we call "laws of Nature." It should be the province of Religion to perform the same work for those other planes of being which transcend the range of our physical senses. But in both Religion and Science there must equally be a basis of observed facts, and in both the generalizations reached must conform to the same laws of Reason.

Hence, if we admit the existence of planes of being and consciousness other than the physical, it is clear that their investigation and observation are essential to the discovery of religious truth. But to make these investigations requires an appropriate instrument of observation, which can only be found in man himself, and in the development of powers and faculties which are as yet latent in the majority of mankind. That such powers and faculties really do exist is rendered in the highest degree probable by the consistent and concordant record that abnormally developed individuals have existed at all periods in the world's history, a record confirmed and substantiated by repeated and careful observation in our own day.

Hence the third object of the T. S. is a necessary corollary to the second, an indispensable means for its achievement, and therefore an indirect, but none the less vitally important, aid to the realization of the first.

But more than this. I hope to show that our first and third objects are each the necessary complement of the other; that Universal Brotherhood can only be *realized* by and through the psychic and spiritual development of the individual, while the effort to

realize that same ideal of Brotherhood itself forms the most powerful and effective means of bringing about this inner growth—nay, that all truly spiritual growth involves and tends towards the realization of that sublime goal of human endeavor.

But it is obvious that all human beings are not brothers, physically speaking, except in a very loose sense of the word. Hence, to prove the reality of Universal Brotherhood as a spiritual fact in nature, we must first demonstrate that man possesses the means to explore other planes of nature than that of gross matter. In other words, it must be shown that human consciousness can operate independently of the physical organism. This last fact has, however, been amply proven by experimental research, both in antiquity and in our own day, notably in the domain of mesmerism, now re-christened hypnotism. These observations show further than the range of perception and the activity of human consciousness increase in proportion as the physical organism approaches a state of *complete* inactivity closely resembling actual death.

Now from the consideration of the changes which our consciousness normally undergoes during dream and deep sleep, as well as from the light thrown thereon by various carefully observed instances of abnormal changes and variations of consciousness, the following general conclusions have been deduced, by strict scientific reasoning, as to the characteristics of human consciousness:

1. The consciousness of each human being at any moment is limited by his "threshold of sensation." \*

\* As the term "threshold of sensation" will probably be new to most members of the Society, a brief explanation may be desirable. It is a well-ascertained fact that any stimulus must possess a certain degree of intensity in order to affect our consciousness so that we perceive it. Now the intensity of stimulus thus required varies in different states of the organism and with different degrees of mental preoccupation or absorption. For instance, if one is deeply absorbed in a book, it will require a much louder call to make him hear than when the mind is not so engaged. The degree of intensity which any given stimulus must attain in order to affect our consciousness, determines what stimuli we shall consciously perceive and what we shall remain unaware of. Generalizing this fact, we see that among all the stimuli striking upon our consciousness only such will excite conscious perception or attain a certain degree of intensity, which thus forms as it were the bounding line of our field of perception. This boundary is the "threshold of consciousness" or "threshold of sensation." It separates, so to speak, the lighted area or field of our perceptions from what is "without," or as we usually phrase it, "outside ourselves." The magnitude of the lighted area, of course, varies enormously in different persons. A man may be perfectly indifferent to all the higher and subtler stimuli which we call the feelings of moral, intellectual, and artistic beauty and purity; or he may perceive them only dimly, so that they fail to excite in him any keen or vivid perception. This conception is a very fertile one, and can be worked out in many directions, with the result of throwing much light on the facts of our daily life and experience.

2. But his potential consciousness enormously transcends the limited sphere so defined, of which alone he is normally cognizant during his waking hours.

This "threshold" is, however, susceptible of very wide oscillations, and can be so pushed back that man can embrace in his consciousness a very large part of what transcends his physical perceptions.\*

In this shifting of the threshold of consciousness lies the possibility of all psychic development. For, in Theosophical phrase, the limited sphere of consciousness bounded by the threshold of sensation constitutes what is called the "personality," while the vaster area of consciousness which (to us) lies on the further side of this threshold is the "individuality." Now, if we seek the determining cause of this limitation, we shall find that it lies in the fact that our interest, our attention, is usually centered largely or wholly upon the physical plane, the field of our consciousness being entirely occupied by the powerful and vivid stimuli which reach us through the avenues of physical sensation, or which arise in connection therewith on the emotional and mental planes. But in certain abnormal states, whether induced by the mesmeric action of another or by the will-power of the individual himself, we find that the transcendental consciousness or individuality makes itself manifest upon the physical plane. In such cases it is found that the limited consciousness or personality is treated by the higher Ego as something foreign to itself, as a mere incidental phase of its own development. But it is just this limited consciousness, or the personality (which at such times disappears from view), that produces in us the feeling that we are each separate from all our fellow men. For the feeling, the consciousness, of "self" is limited (as we know it) to the lighted area within the threshold of consciousness, since that alone is constantly and vividly present to us. Analogy may help us to grasp this idea more clearly. It is a common experience that a man identifies "himself" with his keenest and most vivid feeling or interest, and this is what occurs with regard to the general area of personal consciousness. Man identifies "himself" with that which is constantly and vividly present before him, *i. e.*, with the lighted area within his threshold of sensation. Further, our instinctive belief in the existence and reality of an "outside world" is due to the fact that all stimuli which reach our consciousness from beyond this threshold naturally seem to us to come from "outside" of

\* For a detailed proof of the above positions, see Dr. Carl du Prel's *Philosophy of Mysticism*.

ourselves, since what we feel as "self" is, as we have seen, only the lighted area within this bounding line.

Moreover, we find that in proportion as the threshold of consciousness is pushed back, so does the feeling of separateness diminish; and the same law can be traced right up through every stage of growth and development, mental, emotional, and psychic. Hence we may assert generally that expansion of the field of our consciousness goes hand-in-hand with the detachment of our interest and attention from the physical plane, and from the feelings and sensations which form the content of the personality.

Now it is at once obvious that the real obstacle preventing our realization of Universal Brotherhood is just this feeling of "separateness," and we have just seen that in proportion as we grow and develop psychically this feeling tends to disappear. It is thus plain that the study and investigation of the latent psychic faculties in man tend directly towards the realization of the first object of the T. S.

As we push back the boundary and enlarge the area of our consciousness, our "self" grows and expands in the same proportion, till at last, when we have so widened our circle of interest and removed back our threshold of consciousness that it embraces the Universe, then, in the language of *The Light of Asia*, "The Universe grows I, the dewdrop slips into the shining sea;" Nirvana is attained; not by the annihilation of individuality, but by its expansion till it embraces ALL.

This subject can also be regarded from another point of view. All stimuli which reach our consciousness are in reality forms of vibration, subtler or coarser, more or less rapid, and taking place in media, grosser or more ethereal, as the case may be. In general, the more rapid the vibration and the more subtle the medium it occurs in, the higher, that is, the more spiritual, is the accompanying consciousness. Now we shall cognize either coarser or subtler vibrations according as our attention and interest are centered upon material or spiritual things, on one pole or the other of the One Reality. It is clear, therefore, that, while our attention is taken up and our consciousness filled with things physical, we cannot clearly and vividly cognize the opposite pole—things spiritual. But the distinguishing characteristic of spirit is Universality; it is all-pervading. Hence the more our perceptions approach the spiritual plane, the more we must become at one with that which is all-pervading, because to become cognizant of spiritual things we must respond to the higher vibrations of that plane. Thus, in order to attain the inner development pointed at in our third object, we must in literal truth seek so to attune ourselves

as to "thrill in response to every sigh and thought of all that lives and breathes."

Thus, then, Universal Brotherhood is not only the foundation-stone of the Theosophical Society, but literally the essence of its second and third objects—the life-giving spirit in them all. Without this grand and sublime ideal, the study of ancient religions, sciences, and philosophies would lose its noblest and purest charm. Without it, the pursuit of the third object would be either altogether meaningless or, if in any degree successful, it would lead to the most disastrous consequences, as witness the criminal uses to which the newly rediscovered powers of hypnotism have already been put. Without such a goal to strive for, such a lofty purpose to animate us, our liberality of thought would soon become aimless license, our efforts to study the Wisdom Religion would soon end in the formation of a new sect, the life would die out from among us, and the Theosophical Society would either crumble into dust or remain as a frozen and lifeless corpse, encased in the ice of Dogmatism.



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**Soul and Spirit.**

[*A Paper read before the Aryan T. S. of New York, by Miss Katharine Hillard.*]

**A** GOOD deal of the confusion existing in our minds as to this subject comes from the fact that we mix up the terminologies of two distinct systems. If we take the New Testament classification of man, we find a threefold division, as in I Thess. 5:23, where Paul speaks of "your whole *spirit* and *soul* and *body*;" and in Heb. 4:12, we are told that the word of God is able even to divide *soul* and *spirit*, indicating that the distinction is a subtle one. Hence the *soul* evidently includes all that is neither *body* nor *spirit*, or, in other words (if we set aside the physical body and Atma as not "principles"), the soul, in ordinary parlance, must comprehend all the other principles, *i. e.* the astral body, the life principle, Kama Rupa, the Higher and lower Manas, and Buddhi. This threefold division however, convenient as it seems, has the great disadvantage of confusing the mortal with the immortal, of mixing up the elements that must necessarily perish with the physical body, with those that will survive it. This confusion is furthermore increased by the fact that the translators of the Bible have frequently confounded several words used by the Hebrew writers to express their idea of the different functions of the *soul* (as distinguished from the body and the Universal Spirit.) In the *Key to Theosophy*, p. 109, we have many instances given of the meaning of *soul* as used in the Bible, when in the original *nephesh*, or the *animal soul*, as in Gen. 1:21, where it is translated *living creature*. In Mr. Myers' book on the Kabbala, he defines *nephesh* as the vital principle or animal soul; *neschamah*, as the intellectual and immortal soul (or spirit), and *Rua'h*, as the the conscience or ethical soul; and quotes the *Zohar* as saying: "The breath, *nephesh*, and the spirit, *neschamah*, are united together; whilst the soul, *Rua'h*, depends upon the conduct of the man. If the man purify himself, he will receive the assistance of the Holy

Soul, which purifies and sanctifies it (the *Rua'h*.) If he does not purify himself, he possesses the breath and the spirit, but not the Holy Soul." Here the *Holy Soul* answers to our idea of the Atma or Higher Self, which will assist us to purify and sanctify the faculties of our intellectual, moral, and physical nature, and without which man may be an intelligent, and even a *moral*, but cannot be called a *spiritual* being. The "Holy Soul" is always distinguished in these passages from "the soul," as being of transcendent significance.

*Neschamah*, the spirit, was represented by the brain; *Rua'h*, the soul, by the heart; *nephesh*, the vital principle, by the body. The thinking mind was said to have its seat in the brain, the conscience in the heart, the life-principle permeated the whole body. The *neschamah* (or spirit) is not directly attached to the body, because the *Rua'h* and the *nephesh* are intermediaries between them. Again, in the *Zohar* we are told that only *nephesh* (or the animal soul) existed first in man (an idea which corresponds exactly with the creation of the mindless race, as set forth in the *Secret Doctrine*); "that is the holy form in which man shall prepare himself," and when the *Rua'h* has been added unto him and he does the work of the Lord as he ought, "then rests upon him the *neschamah* soul (or spirit), the upper holy degree, which rules over all. . . . And then he is perfectness, perfect on all sides to deserve in the world to come." And again, "The *neschamah* goes up direct to the very innermost, and the *Rua'h* to Paradise, but not so high as the *neschamah*, and the *nephesh* remains in the grave below."

This doctrine of the Kabbala, then, seems to identify *nephesh*, or the animal soul, with the two lower "principles" (or aspects) of the fivefold man: the astral body and the life-principle. The *Rua'h* corresponds to the Kama Rupa and lower Manas, or the personal Ego; and the *neschamah* to the Higher Manas united with Buddhi, or the Higher and immortal Ego.

Its immortality, nevertheless, that is, the persistence of the *individuality*, is shown to be conditional, as in the Theosophical system, by the extract from the *Zohar* first quoted, which states that the soul is dependent upon human volition; if the man does not live the right life, he will not receive the help of the Holy Soul; that is, he will never become one with his Higher Self or Atma.

The Kabbala compares man to a lamp, of which the wick represents his body; the *nephesh* or animal soul, is compared to the lower dark part of the flame, which cleaves to the wick and cannot exist without it; and when this, the lower light, is perfect, it makes a throne for the upper light (the *Rua'h*) which is white; then the united or double flame makes a throne for the hidden light which

is not seen (the *neschamah*), and so that light is perfect. "So is the man when he is perfect in everything, and then he is called holy."

The question of the immortality of the soul resolves itself very quickly into, What do we mean by the soul? If we answer—Everything that is not the body,—we see upon a little reflection that then our answer *must* be a negative one, because we have tried to combine elements that are incapable of combination, for while it is true that spirit and matter are in the last analysis but different phases of the One, it is equally true that to our present conceptions they are utterly antagonistic. The mortality of the body cannot be denied; nor can we believe that the existence of its double can be prolonged after death; it is like the reflection of your face in a mirror, which disappears when your face is withdrawn. The *life* of the body of course departs with the failing breath. The "animal soul," the passions, the desires, the instincts of the man are what to a large extent make up his *personality*, that by which we recognize him as different from his fellows, and these are all dependent upon the body. The physical constitution, the power of the heart, the strength of the lungs, the perfection of every organ, are responsible for most of the man's *tendencies*, and the lower *Manas*, or the brain and nervous system, for the character and compass of his intelligence and his emotions, and, through them, of his moral nature. That these are so largely physical, we can prove by comparison with animals, and with idiots, who are shown to possess a certain amount of intelligence, and consequent susceptibility to education, both mental and moral, even when devoid of *intellect*, or the power of abstract reasoning, and of spiritual perception. All these things, then, as being dependent upon the body for their very existence, must perish with the body. What, then, is it that survives? It is the hidden, unseen fire within the flame; the higher *Manas*, or the pure *Intellect*, the will and higher consciousness of man, and the spiritual nature, or *Buddhi*, the vehicle of the Divine, the channel through which his spirit flows into and is at one with the Universal Spirit.

This is the true man, the individuality that persists, the portion of the soul that is immortal, if we choose to make it so. The "hidden, unseen fire" burns in every flame, but if we neglect to keep the lamp filled and the wick trimmed and clean, we shall have only smoke and ashes. The will and the consciousness are the true I, and we must purify and sanctify them, as the *Zohar* says, that we may have control, through them, of our lower nature.

We never can rule our bodies even, unless we have the *mind* to teach us how, and the *will* to execute the orders of the mind. This is the purification, which must extend through all the faculties of

our being, and then comes the sanctification, when the spiritual insight, freed by this purification from all physical hindrances, having all the veils of matter dispersed before it like the morning mists, shall *know* the things of the spirit.

But if we fix our eyes solely upon things material, if we never exercise the spiritual powers which alone can make us immortal, then they will grow weaker and fainter, and gradually disappear, and upon the death of the body and its dependent faculties, there will be nothing left to survive; our lamp will be like a Bunsen burner, the dark flame and the heat will be there, but the beautiful white light and the "hidden, unseen fire" will have returned to their Unknown Source.

This is why we are to begin from within and not from without, to learn to control the *mind* that the body may follow of itself; to seek *first* the kingdom of heaven, that all other things may be added unto us. And in the words of the *Bhagavad Gita*, "When the soul hath surpassed the three qualities which are coëxistent with the body, it is delivered from birth and death, old age and pain, and drinketh of the water of immortality."

### The Soul and Its Evolution.

[*The substance of an Address before the Aryan T. S. of New York, by Mr. Bertram Keightley.*]

 F the three terms, Body, Soul, and Spirit, the first or body includes, from the Theosophical standpoint, three distinct factors: (1) the gross elements, or formless matter on the physical plane; (2) the Life Principle or Prana, which unites the gross elements together into "living matter;" and (3) the astral body, or model around which the gross elements are built up by the action of Prana to form the human organism as we know it. It may be objected that two of these three factors pertain more properly to the domain of Soul rather than Body, since they survive, in some degree, the death of the latter. But, strictly speaking, they are really included in the term "body," since under that word we think of "form" and "life" as well as of the actual elements composing the cells of the organism. Further, it is desirable for Theosophists to adhere to this meaning of the word "body," since it enables the term "soul" to be used in a more definite manner and one more nearly in harmony with popular conceptions.

The term "soul," then, would embrace what we call Kama Rupa and Manas; while "spirit" would correspond to the "Monad" or

Atma-Buddhi. In suggesting this use of these terms, I am aware that it involves a somewhat loose use of the word "spirit," which, strictly speaking, should be used only in the sense of the One Universal Spirit. But seeing that the triad of terms—body, soul, and spirit—are generally applied to express the various components of man, it does not seem a very strained use of the term. Moreover, it has the advantage of explaining the phrase, "the descent or fall of spirit into matter," which is so often used to express the cyclic pilgrimage of the Monad through the Manvantara.

At any rate, this is the sense in which these terms are used in the present paper; but it may be well to caution students that they are very frequently used by different writers in other ways, and that he must in each case judge from the context the meaning which the writer attaches to the terms as he employs them. Thus the Monad or Spirit, the only part of man which is immortal and eternal in itself, is linked to the evanescent mortality of the body by the soul, which thus, as all the older writers tell us, partakes of both natures, the mortal and the immortal. Adopting this view of the soul, then, let us first carry the analysis a step or two further from the Theosophical standpoint, and then consider what Theosophy teaches us concerning its past history and future destiny.

We have agreed to take the general term "soul" as embracing Kama Rupa and Manas, or the "animal" as well as the specifically "human" soul. For clearness' sake it will be well to describe more fully what is meant by "animal soul" or Kama Rupa. The term "animal soul" embraces those subtler elements which man shares with the animal kingdom, and which he has in consequence of possessing a physical body. These include the physical appetites, such as desire for food, the reproductive *instinct* (not sexual *passion* as men know it, nor the abstract "creative desire,") and the instinct of self-preservation, with other phases of instinctive consciousness. But in man these elements, being combined with that intelligence which is the specific characteristic of humanity, assume a very different aspect from what they bear in the animal world. It is only in the very lowest and most degraded savage races that we find these animal elements in man ruling his action without the intensification which they derive from combination with the higher or Manasic powers. I have included the purely "Kamic" or animal soul in this analysis, because it is their combination with the Manas or thinking principle which makes man what he is now.

Let us now take up the term *Manas*, or "human soul," and endeavor to form some conception of its nature and attributes. According to Eastern philosophy, the human soul or *Manas* derives

its origin from a universally-diffused principle in nature known as "Mahat" or the "Universal Mind." But the term *Manas* embraces more than is usually included under the term "mind," though this word is the nearest translation that can be found for it. For *Manas* embraces not only the purely mental faculties of thinking, willing, perceiving, desiring, remembering, reasoning, but it includes also the *emotional* faculties, the moral perceptions, and the spiritual aspirations. In man as he exists to-day, these faculties and powers associate themselves either with his spiritual nature, the Monad, or with his physical nature, the animal soul or Kama Rupa. Thus human life as we know it is full of the struggle going on in the soul, or *Manas*, between the opposing attractions of these two poles of his being.

But the *Manas* or human soul is not *per se* an individual entity inhabiting a physical form. Man derives his soul from the Over Soul or Universal Mind, of which the soul of man is but a breath, a ray, individualized through its aggregation about the Monad as a spiritual and the body as a physical center. It is in virtue of the association of *Manas* with these centers that man is a self-conscious being on this plane, as will be seen from the following brief summary of the human soul or *Manas* as taught in the *Secret Doctrine*.

The Monad or Spirit in this connection is regarded as the seat or storehouse in which lie latent all the potentialities which come forth into action and manifestation during the evolutionary process. In the three Rounds, or cycles of activity of the septenary chain of globes to which our Earth belongs, which have preceded the one at present in progress, the Monad put forth or manifested the three factors composing the physical body, and prepared the way for the next, or animal soul. Hence it is stated in the *Secret Doctrine* that the human form appeared on earth in this present cycle before the larger mammalia. But this "human form" was, at first, merely the astral body or ethereal model around which the gross physical elements are built up into the human form by the action of life. Each of these three factors further contains a certain potency corresponding to *Manas* or the soul, which enables it to become subsequently a fitting vehicle or organ for the soul's manifestation. The period of evolution occupied in perfecting these three factors covers the history of the first two and one-half Races of mankind. These are termed in the *Secret Doctrine* the "Mindless Races," from the fact that the soul or *Manas* was not as yet manifested in them, so that the human being of that period was a mere form or shell overshadowed by the Monad, which, in its pure, undifferentiated homogeneity, was practically separated

and distinct from the highly specialized and heterogeneous physical body. When once the physical form was perfected, *i. e.*, towards the latter part of the Third Root Race, the Manas or Soul-breath was infused into man, linking together the Monad and the physical body with the help of the animal soul or Kama Rupa which was developed at the same time. The Manas, or Human Soul, thus became subject to the two sets of attractions already spoken of. On the one hand, it could aggregate around and assimilate itself to the Monad, and thus build an immortal conscious individuality; on the other, combine with the elements composing the animal soul and physical body, thus sharing their destiny, which, as we know, is disintegration as organized units and a return of the substances and forces composing them to the general storehouse of nature.

These two possibilities are both open to that breath of the Universal Mind which is individualized as the Manas, or human soul, in us, because, as already stated, both the Monad and the animal soul contain potencies and potentialities analogous to the Manas itself. Thus from each soul, or Manasic personality, produced by the overshadowing of a physical organism by the Monad, those of its energies, powers, faculties that are in their nature allied to the spiritual or the Monad, unite with it and form the Reincarnating Ego; while those allied to the animal nature cling to it and are dispersed at its disintegration. To apply this more in detail. So far as the soul during life has directed its powers and fastened its attention and interest upon things imperishable, such as the Good, the Beautiful, the True, the Noble, all that is harmonious and universal in its nature, on Knowledge, Love, and Power, so far does the soul become immortal through union with the Monad. And the dim shadows of these universals which we men know in their manifestations as personal qualities and attributes, partake in degree of the immortality of their essence in proportion as they are detached from the narrow limits of their association with physical existence. Likewise all of our attention and interest, all our loves and desires, our efforts and strivings, which have to do with purely physical existence and the gratification of the animal passions and tendencies, all these elements of our souls dissipate with the disintegration of the animal soul.

There is a simile which may perhaps serve to aid us in grasping this conception. We may compare the Monad in its purity and homogeneity to a sphere of clear crystal. Throughout its past evolutionary history down to the present time, it has assimilated Manasic or soul elements from the innumerable phases of its past manifestations, so that now the clear crystal is radiant with all the

colors of the heavenly rainbow, resembling a sphere of iridescent glass. In its present human manifestation this iridescent sphere is, as it were, concealed under manifold wrappings of variously colored materials, the coloring matter of which is very subtle in its nature. When death frees the radiant sphere from its wrappings, their colors still cling to it, leaving behind a many-colored design on its surface, representing the essence or aroma of the experiences, development, tendencies, etc., of that particular manifestation. Gradually this design and its colors are absorbed into the substance of the radiant sphere, disappearing *as a design*, but adding more or less to the iridescent brilliancy of the whole sphere. So does the Reincarnating Ego, the *immortal* soul, evolve and grow by the elements assimilated from each successive earth life.

NOTE.—The Manas being the true center, the pivot of evolution, there are many other aspects and branches of the subject which I hope to make some attempt at considering in the future. The above paper is a mere fragment, intended to suggest certain lines of thought and study, for an attempt even to treat the subject as a whole would require not a paper but a volume.



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## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

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### Soul and Spirit.

[*A Paper read before the Aryan T. S. of New York, by Alexander Fullerton.*]

**T**HE distinction between soul and spirit has never, I think, been very clearly stated by any Theosophical writer. One might, of course, easily transcribe from various Theosophical works a lot of passages bearing more or less remotely on the subject, but this would be profitless, and, moreover, is only what can be done by any schoolboy with an ample supply of paper and a lead-pencil.

Madame Blavatsky in the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge* identifies soul with mind. "Mind," she says, "is a term perfectly synonymous with soul." I much doubt if this assertion would be sustained by any lexicographer. There is, indeed, great question as to whether there exist in the English language two words perfectly synonymous; but even if so, these can hardly be an illustration. "Mind" is the intelligent principle in man, "soul" the emotional and moral. The three principles of "mind," "soul," and "spirit" correspond to the three Greek equivalents, "nous," "psüche," and "pneuma." Mind can no more be confounded with soul than soul can with spirit.

Nor, perhaps, would it be just to consider these as three steps of an ascending series. This would make mind the lowest. But hereto are several objections. One is that the second principle, the soul, would sometimes be active in regions whence the inferior principle, mind, would be absent or nearly so, as in the case of certain animals stupid yet affectionate, as also of idiots, who, though destitute of intelligence, yet acquire attachment to care-takers. Another is that the department of the soul known as "conscience" is dependent for its accuracy upon enlightenment by the intellect.

Conscience without that enlightenment may dictate the gravest crimes, a very good example being the promoters of religious persecution, they having often been men of singular sincerity of character and purpose, but committing the most hideous outrages in the name of God because of erroneous opinions as to His nature and the way to serve Him. Only as conscience became informed with right views of Divine character and of human rights did such abominations abate. A third objection is that language itself has embodied in the phrase "the godlike quality of reason" its instinctive conviction that intellect is a lofty endowment of humanity, derived from and expressive of a celestial source. Such a phrase means that, in proportion as intelligence diminishes, the being thus lacking it recedes from the sphere of the divine, until, as with idiots, there is nothing left but a nature purely animal.

Probably the relationship of the three may be well symbolized by a triangle, mind and soul being the points below, spirit being the apex above and directly communicating with each.

If we understand by "mind" the principle of intelligence, that which takes hold of purely intellectual matters, reasons, computes, invents, predicts, the distinction between it and "soul" is very marked. "Soul" has to do with two departments, the emotional and the moral. It is the soul which loves or hates, is swayed by beauty of language or music, feels the sentiment underlying the eloquence of the orator and the song of the poet, perhaps is strong enough to voice them itself. And then, too, it is the soul which senses right and wrong, swells with indignation at turpitude or cruelty and with homage to nobility of character or act. It is the home of conscience, that monitor whose tones may be muffled by conventional habits or by deliberate effort, yet sound loud and clear as the ear becomes attentive to them and the will quick to respond and obey. We do not reason out why we love; we do not love with the mind; sentiment is not a functioning of intelligence; moral dicta do not emanate from the brain.

If "soul" was a term "perfectly synonymous" with "mind," perception of beauty, wherever found, would be mental. Two consequences would follow. *First*, beauty would not be instantaneously perceived and enjoyed. Reasoning is a slower matter than instinct, even when quickly performed. But, in fact, we know that the sight of a lovely face, of a picture, a statue, an architectural gem, a landscape, instantly and instinctively evokes admiration, and this it does, not in proportion as the beholder is clever, but in proportion as he is sensitive. Indeed, he may be unconscious of any intellectual movement whatever, but simply of delight. *Second*, if perception of beauty was mental, the causes

producing the beauty would need first to be reasoned out, and the recognition of the beauty follow. Yet we very well know that we are first impressed by the beauty, and only afterwards, when sentiment has calmed down, do we examine detail and causes. Upon seeing Giotto's Tower the eye is ravished; it is later that one perceives the complex elements creating it a gem,—the graceful proportions, the exquisite ornament, the marvelous combination of color and design. A scene in the Alps is not the subject of immediate analysis and of subsequent enjoyment, but conversely.

The region of feeling, emotion, sentiment of every kind is the soul. Most especially is it there that moral distinctions are perceived, moral worth honored, moral outrages resented. The healthy glow felt when one learns of some fine and generous deed is a different thing from the gentle excitement over an ingenious novel or a well-executed argument; and the equally healthy flush of indignation over some deed of meanness or cruelty is not a calm intellectual dissent, but a vigorous protest of the moral sense. Very often the moralist may be unable to give his reasons for so feeling; he can only say that it is *nature* which asserts herself within him. No doubt his moralities are often conventional and represent the spirit of the time; as in the department of theology, whereof Lecky says that there are men "who are still at that stage of development where it is considered more sacrilegious to question the inspiration of an Apostle than to disfigure by any conceivable imputation the character of Deity," or as in the department of law, where heavy penalties are inflicted for purely factitious offenses, and grave wrongs on a community are mildly treated. To have accuracy, the sentiments of the soul need the support of reason, and yet the instinctive prompting, the warm outpouring, are not from the brain, but from *it*.

But what is the spirit? How hard it is to define it; how much easier to describe its operations! Perhaps one may broadly say that the mind and the soul have their roots in the seen, spirit in the unseen. Mind deals with the matters which have come under its cognizance, these emerging more or less directly from an original physical shell. Even imagination finds its materials among those which have accumulated from experience, and if it remoulds them so far as to have destroyed a semblance to reality, makes them unimaginable. When we trace back the emotions of the soul to their causes, we find them in exterior incidents or sights or sounds, a physical basis supplying the occasion whereon those emotions play. Not so with the spirit, whose movements are ever upward. Its bent is towards the skies, not towards the soil; the things of earth are nothing to it, it breaths the impalpable ether of bound-

less space, soars beyond the visible universe, leaves behind even thought, and stops not till the presence of Deity is felt. Frothingham, using, indeed, "soul" for "spirit," but describing the search after the Unknown God, writes thus:—" Boldest of all, the soul plumes her wings of faith for a flight to the very empyrean itself. Her pinions of aspiration bear her above the earth; she distances vision, outruns the calculations of the mathematician, leaves time and space behind, with open eye looks steadily at the sun. But the sun itself is a shadow. Light there is, a shoreless ocean of light, atmospheres glowing with its radiance, throbbing with its gracious undulations; on its waves she floats serenely; in its silence she rests at peace. But no voice breaks the silence, no form of creative godhead walks on the sea of glory. The soul must be content to find a home as wide as infinite thought, as warm as eternal love, but never to see the fashioner of it, never to find the soft bosom of the mother in whose breast it can nestle. She dwells in a castle of air, built by the vapors exhaled from tears, and made gorgeous by the upward-slanting light of her hope."

Now in this vivid passage there are inwrought two ideas, one of which distinguishes the spirit—miscalled by the author the "soul"—from the real soul, the other distinguishing it from mind. The former is that the great function of the spirit is aspiration. It is not a responsiveness in emotion to some cause acting upon it from without, not an excitation from an impression made by an incident or a spectacle, as with the soul; but an interior, spontaneous, eager impulse of its own, the yearning solicitude after higher joys unfound through body or soul, joys which can only be reached in communion with its kind, in identification with the Infinite. More or less acutely conscious that everything here is limited, that the flesh is a hamper, even a bar, to the perfect freedom of the true Ego, knowing well that there must be larger experiences, keener bliss, than are possible through even the emotional and moral nature as we have it, the spirit yearns for liberation from the ties which bind it down and the clouds which hem it in. And so it pants and struggles and overcomes, frees itself gradually from the animalism which agitates it, and the errors which enervate it, and the passions which paralyze it, until, after many incarnations in matter, it has become triumphant over all and soars to its congenial home.

The second idea, distinguishing the spirit from mind, is that the conviction back of aspiration is not a demonstrated proposition of logic, a result of mental process, but an assurance unfathered by reason and independent of it. This is "faith." As one of our own Adepts has defined it, it is "the evidence of things not seen."

"Evidence," mark you; not, indeed, a platoon of intellectual proofs, but a certainty far greater,—that unshakeable, assured intuition which has its roots in the essence of being, and is strengthened by every ray from the Central Sun and by every current from the far-off skies. To it the supposition that there is nothing higher than matter and force is an unthinkable absurdity; even an argument for a Divine Source seems superfluous and weak. Why? Because it does not believe, it *knows*; it does not reason, it *realizes*. And this in the unseen, the impalpable, the intangible.

Such are some of the distinctions between mind, soul, and spirit. That these three elements of our compound nature must and do act greatly upon each other is certain. Mind may become so expanded and trained that it looks upon all topics from a purely intellectual view-point. Cold and glittering, it may have frozen out emotion; self-sufficient and imperious, it may have dispensed with aspiration. Soul, weakened into sentimentality, sometimes enfeebles the reason and mistakes dilettanteism for spirituality. Spirit may be chilled by indifference or encircled by vapor from dialectics or from moral rot. And yet so strong is it, so vigorous and Divine, that it sometimes surpasses all boundaries of ignorance or cold-heartedness, makes itself felt in every department of him who believes in it, stimulates the brain, warms the soul, and turns the unlearned into a Jacob Böhme, the ill-regulated into a Madame Guyon. Whatever it touches it electrifies; whatever it pervades it exalts.

The presence of spirit, awakening faith and inciting aspiration, is what makes possible the transcendentalist and the mystic. They do not pretend that thought and emotion exhaust the range of human possibilities. Far, far beyond the utmost scope of mind or soul, they see an avenue stretching endlessly onward. Human imperfections have dropped away from the pilgrim as, with eyes ever intent on the vista, he hastens along; the white light of eternal truth pours unhindered through his aura, no longer clouded with error or evil; a sense of the everlasting, the changeless, braces him more and more as illusions have vanished into the past; and a conviction of utter freedom thrills him with unspeakable fulness and joy. If a remembrance of material pleasures ever flits across the serenity of his spiritual existence, it excites no interest and no influence, for former things have passed away and all have become new. Entering further into the light invisible to human eyes, his steps are lost to view and his experiences to imagination, for he is merging with the Universal, approaching ever nearer to that Divine original which is the Source of all Life, all Wisdom, and all

Power. He is no longer pressing forward to Spirit,—he has become it.

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### Spirit, Soul, and Body.

[*A Paper by Henry T. Patterson, of the Brooklyn T. S., read June, 1890.*]

**S**OME time since we were discussing the seven different principles of Man, and perhaps it will be well to group these seven against our present three. But one of these seven, Atma, does not correspond and cannot be made to correspond with any of them: The word Spirit can possibly be better understood than it generally is, if we consider it analogous with motion or vibration; and the word Matter can be better understood if we consider it analogous with Substance. Now, we cannot possibly conceive of motion except as of something in motion, nor do we know substance, as is proven by scientific investigations, excepting through its vibrations. What we really mean, then, when we say Spirit is, to carry out the analogy, a maximum of motion or vibration and a minimum of substance; Matter, conversely, being a maximum of substance with a minimum of vibration. In the imperceptible gradation from a maximum of Spirit to a minimum of Substance, and from a maximum of Substance to a minimum of Spirit, there must be a point where there is an equal amount of each, and this we can consider as analogous to Soul. There is a state in the physical condition called the "critical condition." When water is turning into ice, there comes a time when it is neither fluidic nor solid, that is, when it is neither water nor ice. In this condition a slight change in the temperature will cause it to turn either into water or into ice. Neither water nor ice is as susceptible to impressions as matter is in this critical condition. If we suppose that this is the state of the Soul, we can then understand how it can be deflected either upward or downward in its course by a force which would be too slight to affect either the lower personality or the Higher Self.

Again, as we consider conditions which are highly spiritual, we recognize, as stated before, that it is impossible to conceive of the purely spiritual. For this inconceivable state we may use the word "meta-spiritual." Now, carrying out our comparison between the Sanskrit terms and our own terms, we may compare them all about as follows:

Atma is equivalent to the meta-spiritual, an inconceivable state

and therefore not in the least comprehensible; and yet a term which we have to use and which postulates something which we do not know, and which is as essential as the word "eternal," which postulates an infinite, although we know it not.

Buddhi is the vehicle of Atma—that is, the meta-spiritual embodies itself in the spiritual, having thus substance or body.

Buddhi has for its vehicle the Higher Manas. The Higher Manas has for its vehicle the Lower, and thus we have the Soul in its two aspects, one with a tendency downwards to the material, and the other with a tendency upwards to the spiritual.

The Linga Sarira is the vehicle or body for the Lower Manas, and corresponds to matter, although not to gross matter.

Prana is the life-principle vitalizing all these, and corresponds to life currents so far as we know them, whether viewed as magnetic or in their higher aspects.

Enclosing all these as the casket encloses the gem is the Sthula Sarira, the gross material body. This is the "coat of skins" referred to in Genesis, which the Lord gave to Adam and Eve to protect them from the elements, for it would be as unwise for man to be unguarded against the ordinary elements and to be exposed without clothing or housing, or protection against heat, cold, storm, and flood, as it would be for the astral man in his undeveloped condition to be exposed to these same elements on a supersensuous plane where we call them elementals.

If the above positions have been taken with an approximate correctness, it would seem to follow that the problem of existence has not so much to do either with the Sthula Sarira or the Linga Sarira as it has with the Manas, which is a balancing point. We read of the White Magician and the Black Magician, and of the struggle which must sometime take place between them. We then picture to ourselves a bloody warfare in which the White, ranged on one side, attack the Black, ranged on the other, and with fire and every conceivable weapon finally annihilate them. This is a picture which is possibly somewhat misleading. The White Magician may be the higher nature and the Black Magician the lower, and in the conflict the higher may have to conquer the lower, which eventually becomes disintegrated and dispersed.

So in the Cosmos, towards the end of the Manvantara the higher cosmic nature is to conquer the lower, preparatory to the pralaya into which all must enter.

It is therefore the struggle of the Soul to raise the lower to the higher which is the life we have to lead. The thread which can lead this Ariadne out of the labyrinth is that pure unselfishness which forgets itself and always strives for others. With this

thread in her hand she will not lose her way, but go calmly forward, knowing that she will rise to that highest life, of which it is now useless for us to try to conceive.

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### Is the Soul Immortal?

[*A Paper read before the Aryan T. S. of New York, by a Member.*]

**I**N considering this question—one of the gravest importance to every human being—the subject naturally arranges itself under three heads:

1. What is the soul?
2. What is meant by the word “immortal”?
3. The relation between the soul and immortality?

#### 1.

And first as to the soul itself. Man in his simplest aspect may be regarded as a duad, consisting of the lower and Higher Self. These divisions would correspond in ordinary phraseology to body and soul, the former the embodiment of all that is low, earthly, and material; the latter of all that is high, noble, and spiritual. This is a classification which all can easily grasp, and for practical everyday use it has some advantages over a more complex arrangement. The bodily appetites must be mortified, the desires of the flesh brought into subjection, and the whole lower self, with its affections and powers, purified and lifted up into the higher.

But the duad fails to help us understand many of the perplexing questions of life, and in particular makes no discrimination between soul and spirit. The three-fold constitution of man—the ordinary biblical or theological conception of his nature—is a step higher. This makes of man a triad, consisting of body, soul, and spirit. In this arrangement soul and spirit are considered as distinct principles or components, although the theological ideas respecting the difference between the two are of the vaguest. But the division of man into a triad is a clear improvement upon that of the duad, and, among other things, throws considerable light

upon many passages in the Bible. Thus the soul, being placed between body and spirit, necessarily has two aspects; on one side (the lower) of the earth, earthy; on the other (the higher) spiritual or heavenly. Uniting itself to the body and yielding obedience to its lower desires, the soul becomes the "carnal man," which we are told is in a state of enmity against God or the Higher Self. On the other hand, the union of soul with spirit forms the Divine or Heavenly Man, the new creature, the Christ within us. This arrangement also helps us to understand the allegories of the New Testament respecting the birth of Christ, and shows in what sense it can be truly said of him, as of other Avatars, that he was born of a virgin. This explanation will be found admirably worked out in the *Perfect Way*, to which those desirous of pursuing the subject farther are referred.

If to these three, body, soul, and spirit, we add the astral body, we have the quaternary, or four-fold division of man elaborated in Doctor Kingsford's book, already mentioned. But the addition of the astral body to the list of principles or vehicles sheds no new light on the nature of the soul. It is only when we reach the septenary classification of man that anything like a satisfactory solution of the problem begins to dawn upon the mind. Stating briefly, then, the result of gleanings in *Esoteric Buddhism*, *Secret Doctrine*, and the like, the soul may be described or defined as the Ego or the Manas. It is the real man, the conscious thinker, the I-am-I resident in the physical body for the purpose of reaping experiences and attaining spiritual growth. But confusion of thought has arisen from overlooking the fact that the soul itself is a duad, and is so regarded all through Theosophical literature. There is, for instance, a spiritual soul and a human soul; a Divine Ego and a personal Ego; a Higher Manas and a Lower Manas. Let us try to understand this a little more in detail.

The septenary classification may be divided into two groups, a lower quaternary and an upper triad. The quaternary, or lower self, consists of body, astral body, vitality, and desire or Kama; the triad, of Atma, Buddhi, and Manas. But where is the connecting link between the higher and the lower, between the triad and the quaternary? It lies in the division or duality of Manas. Manas, the lower element of the triad, casts its shadow or reflection upon the quaternary. This reflection unites with the desires or Kama of the quaternary, and forms what is known as the Kama-Manas, the personal Ego, the human soul. The Higher, united to Buddhi, is called the spiritual soul.

The question, then, "What is the soul?"—that is, the human soul—may be thus answered:

The soul is the personal Ego, the fourth principle or vehicle in man counting upward, the aggregation of all the desires and passions of the lower self, illuminated by the reflection of Manas and thus endowed with mind or the thinking principle; the consciousness of the lower quaternary.

## II.

But is the soul as thus defined immortal? The word "immortal" literally means not subject to death. But what is death? Strictly a process of change, not one of extinction. What we usually mean by immortality is continuous, conscious existence—life throughout eternity without change or decay and without end. Is the soul then immortal? The answer must be decidedly in the negative.

In the first place, it may be stated broadly that there is nothing outside of the one, or the Absolute, which is not subject to change. The differentiated must become homogeneous. The manifested must return to the unmanifested. The projected rays must be reabsorbed by the central sun. The many must become the One. If this is death, then the soul can have no share in immortality. But while everything changes, nothing perishes. Forms disappear, but the essence of things remains. Matter, as science demonstrates, is indestructible. And as the soul is matter—on a higher plane than that of the physical body, but still matter—it is in this respect immortal; its substance or essence always was and always will be.

But will it exist consciously? In spite of all changes through which under the universal law of evolution it may pass, will it retain its individuality? Will it always know itself as itself? The answer here seems plain and definite. As a conscious entity the soul is not immortal *per se*; its immortality is only conditional. It may work out its salvation and attain immortality, or it may fail and be lost. Immortality is not conferred upon the soul as a gift from some higher source. It is a state won by patient, earnest striving, by holy aspirations, by bitter suffering, by purifications, by self-sacrifice, by loving deeds, by absorption in the Divine. If the soul takes all its pleasure in the lower self, if it lives solely in and for physical sensations, if it is of the earth, earthy, and ever tending downwards, if it stops its ear to the Voice of its Higher Self, or conscience, and gives itself up to the gratification of the lower desires, it will ultimately reach a point where, no longer capable of receiving spiritual light or life, it will be abandoned by its Higher Self and doomed to perish. Such, at least, seem to be the teachings of Theosophy. This is apparently the condition

referred to in the New Testament as the "second death," and as the sin against the Holy Ghost which is unpardonable, being forgiven neither in this world nor in the world to come,—unpardonable from the very necessity of the case. For if the Divine Ego has taken its departure from the man, how can he stop on his downward career? Every good gift and every perfect gift, says one of the Apostles, is from above. Every holy thought, every spiritual longing, every desire for better things, comes from the Higher Self; and if its place is empty, well may the man exclaim, "Woe is me, for I am undone."

The only thing which exists permanently is spirit. To become immortal the soul must be spiritualized. To live forever man must become a god. How is the great work to be achieved? The soul, personal Ego, by and through its experiences in its physical tabernacle, must, in ways already indicated, lift itself from the quaternary into the triad. Consciousness must no longer dwell in the fourth principle, but be merged into the fifth. Then, spiritual self-consciousness attained, immortality is won. The man then lives no longer in the present or the future, but in the Eternal. He goes on from strength to strength, from one glory to another, ever rising to higher planes, ever partaking of greater degrees of blessedness, and through all retaining his conscious individuality from Manvantara to Manvantara.

In the early part of this paper the soul is said to be the real man. What are we to understand by the word "real"? Usually by the real we mean the spiritual and the permanent, that which persists through all changes, which existed before the everlasting hills cast their shadows on the plains below, and will continue when they shall have vanished into space. The temporary, the evanescent, the perishable is not the real, but the illusory. In this sense of the word, the "real" man is the Higher Manas united with Atma-Buddhi—in short, the upper triad. But to us men and women of the Fourth Round the triad is a mere abstraction. It is a potentiality, not an actuality. The utmost that can be said of the Higher Manas—the lowest element of the triad—is that it is in the germ state of development. It is a bud only, not a full-grown or even a half-grown plant. And if this be true of Manas, what can be predicated of the still higher and more undeveloped constituents of the Triad? As a plain matter of fact and experience, the Manasic triad is far above us in the clouds, casting now and then, it is true, a ray of light more or less faint upon the lower quaternary, but substantially unknown to and unfelt by the personal consciousness. This latter, therefore, at present and on this plane, may be regarded as the real Ego or man—that which we know.

that with which we have to deal, that which we are, although not that which we are striving to be. May we all succeed in transforming the lower into the higher, the material into the spiritual, the personal into the impersonal, the finite into the infinite!

### On the Evolution of Man.

[A Paper by Katharine Hillard, of the Aryan T. S.]

**W**HEN Shakespeare divided the life of man into seven ages, it was probably without any conscious following of occult lines. Dante estimated human life (in the *Banquet*) as comprising *four* divisions: adolescence, youth, old age, and decrepitude; but then he merged youth and maturity into one, and left out of account infancy and the pre-natal existence (of which he has much more to say in the *Divine Comedy*), so that the three he only indicates would fill up the count of seven. If the law of evolution dominates the material plane, it must hold good, as Herbert Spencer has shown, throughout the universe; and whether we consider the evolution of the world or the evolution of man, we find the same line of progress carried out through all the gradual changes from the simple to the complex. As the race progresses, so does the individual, and we see the same process as humanity itself must follow. The three great divisions of his being necessitate three principal lines of evolution—bodily, mental, and psychical growth.

If we take the scheme of cosmic evolution as laid down in the *Secret Doctrine*, we find the seven terms of the abstract formula given in the Proem to the Stanzas.

1. The 1st Stanza describes the state of the One All before the first flutter of awakening manifestation. (First, that is, only in relation to what follows after that special period of pralaya.) This state being that of Absoluteness *per se*, it can neither be conceived nor described, only in a dim manner apprehended as the negation of all attributes.

2. Nor can the Western mind, we are told, distinguish that which differentiates the condition described in Stanza II from that of Stanza I, save by the intuitive or psychic faculties.

3. The 3d Stanza describes the actual awakening of the Universe, and the emergence of the Monads from their state of absorption within the One,—the first differentiation of life.

4. Stanza IV describes what is called in Hindû mythology the “Creation” of the gods, or the coming into being of the septenary

hierarchy of conscious Divine Powers, who are the active manifestations of the One Supreme Energy. They embody in themselves what we know as "the laws of Nature," and are the framers and shapers of the Universe. They are referred to in Esdras, 1:6 as "the motive Powers"—"Before the motive Powers were established, before the innumerable multitude of angels were gathered together."

5. In Stanza v the process of world-formation is described: first diffused cosmic matter; then a fiery whirlwind, the first stage in the formation of a nebula; then the condensation of that nebula, and the formation of planets and systems of planets, and of the angelic hierarchy.

6. Stanza vi gives us the various stages in the formation of worlds, and the evolution of the seven elements, of which four are already fully manifested, and the fifth (ether) only partially. With the 4th Sloka of Stanza vi ends the description of universal cosmogony, the rest referring to our earth. Then comes the beginning of man.

The *Secret Doctrine* teaches the simultaneous evolution of seven human groups on seven different portions of our globe; the birth of the *astral* before the *physical* body, for which it serves as model; and that man, in this Round, preceded every mammalian—the anthropoids included—in the animal kingdom.

The description of the evolution of our earth itself begins with a reference to her casting off her old skins and putting on her "seven new skins," meaning the seven geological changes which accompany and correspond to the evolution of the seven Root-Races of humanity. Then after immense periods of time comes the evolution of minerals, vegetation, small insects, and "water-men, terrible and bad," from the earth only, after which the creative Spirits come as flames; they dry up the waters and destroy the monsters. As in Genesis, the gods said, "Let the dry land appear."

Then follows the creation of men by the "Lunar Fathers," who, being boneless, could give no life to beings with bones. Their progeny were phantoms with neither form nor mind. Therefore they were called the Shadow race. The first Fathers could give only form, not mind. Not even the solar Spirits and the earth-fires could do more than produce a good *form* that could stand, walk, run, recline, and fly, but had no sense.

1. The First Race of men were simply the astral doubles of their Fathers, who were the most progressed entities from a preceding, though lower, sphere, the shell of which is now our moon.

2. The Second Race was the product (by budding and expansion) of the shadowy First, as the sea-anemone puts forth a bud

which falls off at the appointed time and becomes a new existence. The First Race merged into the Second, and became one with it. Being only astral shadows, it could not die, it simply melted into the Second, somewhat more substantial, and therefore capable of death. When the astral body became covered with more solid flesh, man developed a physical body.

3. Then the shadowy Second Race evolved the Third, differentiating by degrees from a form without sex into the male-female, and then man and women. The Third, the last semi-spiritual race, was also the last vehicle of the divine and innate Wisdom. The Fourth, in which Wisdom was united already to earthly and therefore impure intelligence, had consequently to acquire that Wisdom by initiation and great struggle.

All this description of the production of the earliest forms of man agrees perfectly with the scientific theory as described by Schmidt and Laing. Afterwards with the dawn of mind began the mental as well as the physical evolution. By the mysterious power thought the spiritual forefathers of all the subsequent Arhats were created. They were the Sons of Will and Yoga.

The evolution of animals follows the same general lines as the human being, from the shadowy and boneless to the vertebrate dragons, reptiles, and birds. The human and animal lines met and mingled, and the progeny of the huge she-animals and the dumb and mindless men was a race of red-haired monsters, going on all-fours, not the anthropoid apes, but the primitive "lower man," the true "missing-link." It must be remembered that both men and animals were still semi-astral, and utterly unlike any forms we know to-day. As these semi-astral animal forms consolidated into the physical (*Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1, p. 689), the descendants of these creatures were modified by external conditions, until the breed, dwindling in size, culminated in the lower apes of the Miocene period. From the union of these with the later Atlanteans resulted the species of ape now known as anthropoid.

IV. With the Fourth Race came the dawn of mind and evolution of language; first, the vowel-formed chant of the Second Race, then the scanty monosyllables of the Third Race, then the agglutinative languages now surviving as a fragmentary fossil idiom among the American aborigines, then the inflectional speech, the root of the Sanskrit, the first true language.

It was the Fourth Race only which was the first completely human species, although very much larger than the present one. "They became tall with pride," says Sloka 41, and built huge cities and great statues of themselves. They gradually became so lost and sunk in the material that they lost their faculty of spiritual

insight. . . "The third eye acted no longer." Then came the great deluge that swept away Atlantis and all the unholy.

5. "The Fifth Race, produced from the holy stock, remained; it was ruled over by the first Divine Kings." "Who re-descended, who made peace with the Fifth, who taught and instructed it," says Stanza XII. They gave to men the use of fire, and wheat, and other fruits not known to earth. This Fifth Race, to which we belong, must finally merge into a Sixth, to be succeeded by a Seventh,—who can say how many millions of years hence?

The evolution of the individual follows the same lines as that of the races or the worlds. The embryo, first a mere nucleus of inorganic matter, a mineral, a stone, takes on the likeness of a plant, then a reptile, finally the human shape; and as in the Fourth Race *mind* developed, so at the "fourth hour" as the Kaballa calls it, says the *Secret Doctrine*, "the first flutter of the immortal breath passes through its being, it moves, and the divine essence settles in the infant frame." But only with the seventh year, we are told, does *Atma* awake, and with it the responsibility of a conscious, sentient being, with its wondrous seven-fold nature, with its five developed senses, and the undeveloped potential two that the coming races will see brought to perfection. So it is that

"Wisdom hath builded her house:  
She hath hewn out her seven pillars." —*Prov. 9:1.*

"Such is the course of Nature under the sway of Karmic Law," says the *Secret Doctrine*, and sums up the 1st Book of Vol. I with these significant words of an unknown sage: "The Present is the child of the Past; the Future the begotten of the Present." Therefore let us look to it that we make our Present so worthy in all respects that our Future shall be a glorious one. This is the true lesson of the evolution of man.



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# THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: AMERICAN SECTION.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE, P. O. Box 2659.

## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

NEW YORK, AUGUST, 1890.

**"The Self is the Friend of Self and also Its Enemy."**

[*A Paper read before the Aryan T. S., June 6, 1890, by William Q. Judge.*]

**T**HIS sentence in the *Bhagavad Gita* has been often passed over as being either meaningless or mysterious; on one hand worthless to consider, and on the other hand impossible. Some students have, however, made good use of the teaching contained in it. It is a verse that bears directly upon Theosophy as applied to our daily life, and therefore may well be scrutinized to-night.

It indicates two selves, one the enemy and also the friend of the other. Evidently, without the suggestions found in Theosophy, two selves in one person cannot seem otherwise than meaningless, except in those cases, admitted by Science, where there is an aberration of the intellect, where one lobe of the brain refuses to work with the other, or where there is some cerebral derangement. But after a little study of the constitution of man—material and spiritual—as we find it outlined in the Wisdom-Religion, we easily see that the higher and the lower self are meant.

The next injunction, to "raise the self by the self," clearly points to this; for, as a thing cannot raise itself without a fulcrum, the self which will raise us must be the higher one, and that which is to be raised is the lower.

In order to accomplish this task we must gain an acquaintance with the self which is to be raised. The greater and more accurate that acquaintance is, the quicker will proceed the work of elevating the being who attempts it.

Let us for a moment look at the obstacles in the way, the reasons why, with so many, their understanding of themselves is so plainly deficient.

Everyone knows that he can see the defects in the actions and

character of other men better than his own. Some, of course, there are who do not allow that they have defects.

St. James says that a man looketh in a glass and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he is. While I have often doubted this, yet it is true in respect to that looking-glass which is often by others held up to us to see ourselves in. We see for a moment our appearance, and then forget it.

There are some things, however, as to which it is often impossible for us to know ourselves. Such of our tones as are harsh or disagreeable we often cannot hear as others do. For there is hardly anything so difficult as to really hear our own voice in its entirety of tone and accent. We are so accustomed to it that we cannot tell whether it be pleasing or repellent, musical or discordant. We have to rely upon the statements of those who hear it. Indeed, I doubt seriously if anyone can ever fully hear, in the way those to whom we speak do, the tones of his voice, because it is conveyed to us not only through the medium of the outer ear which receives the vibrations made without us, but we receive it in addition through the vibrations made within all through the skull, and hence it must ever be a different voice for ourselves. So it would not be profitable to pay too much attention to the sound of our voice if we do so to the exclusion of that inner attitude which nearly always determines the tone in which we speak; for if our feelings be kind and charitable, it is more than likely that the vocal expression of them will correspond. The cultivation of the voice, so far as it is possible, can safely be left to those teachers who aim to soften and polish it.

By taking a few examples from among the many about us and assuming that they represent possible defects and peculiarities of our own, we may arrive at something useful in our Theosophic life.

Here is one who will constantly tell you that several others are always very fond of talking of themselves and their affairs, and appear to take no interest in the conversation unless it has themselves for center. And after thus depicting the failing of the others, this person—man or woman—immediately proceeds to show that that is his own particular fault, for from that moment the burden of the conversation is “I” or “my” affairs.

Our next subject is one who talks a great deal about altruism and brotherhood, but would not give a dollar to any good cause. Not perhaps from intentional niggardliness, but from sheer habit of not giving and not helping.

Here is another who exemplifies the prominent defect of the century, inattention. He listens to you, but only hears a part,

and then, when repeating what he says he heard you say, he gives a version entirely at variance with yours. Or, listening to an argument or discussion, he only attends to that part which being familiar to him strikes him favorably.

Next we have the bigot who, while exalting freedom of thought and the unity of all men, displays most frightful bigotry.

Then there is another who illustrates a variety of the first to which I referred;—the man who wishes apparently only to impose his own views upon you, and is careless about knowing what your opinions may be.

Here is the partisan who favors such a school or set. Nothing can be said against them, no defect may be pointed out. Partisanship clouds it all.

Now all of these are only samples; but in some degree every one of us has them all, perhaps slightly, but still there. They are all the result of the predominance of the lower self, for they all show a disposition to put the personal *I* to the front. They are the present triumph of the lower self over the efforts of the higher. They may be abated in some degree by attention to their outer expression, but no real progress will be gained unless work upon the hidden plane is begun. Such a defect as that one of not listening long to another man's views, but hurrying to tell him what you think yourself, is one that affects the acquiring of new ideas. If you constantly tell others what you think, you are gaining nothing. For your experience and views are your own, well known to you. The repeated expression of them only serves to imprint them more strongly on your mind. You do not receive any of the new lights that other minds might cast upon your philosophy if you gave them the opportunity.

There are other factors in our constitution which are powerful for the production of faults. Every man has two lines of descent. One is that which comes through his parents and has to do with his mental and physical make-up. This line may run back into the most strange and peculiar places, and be found winding in and out among manners and minds not suspected by us. Suppose your physical line of descent comes through Danes or Norwegians and mine through the French. There will be to some extent a want of sympathy and appreciation on the mental plane between us. Of course this effect will not be apparent if the period of time is long since our blood ran in those bodies, but still there will be left some trace of it. There will be a tendency always for the physical, including the brain, to show the characteristics which result from the preponderance of inherited faculties and dispositions. These characteristics belong wholly to the physical plane, and

are carried down from the centuries past by inheritance, affecting the particular body you may inhabit in any one incarnation. It is your Karma to have that sort of physical environment about your inner self. Now the obstacles to the perception of truth and to the acquirement of knowledge of self which are in consequence of the physical inheritance, are difficult to perceive, involving much study and self-examination for the bringing them to light. But they are there, and the serious Theosophist will search for them. These differences in the physical body, which we will call for the time differences in inheritance, are of the highest importance. They resemble the differences between telescopes or microscopes made by different opticians, and tend to cause us to see truth clearly or blurred, or surrounded by many-colored mists. What we most desire to have is a mental telescope that is not only powerful, but also devoid of the colors which achromatic quality only will dispel.

The second line of descent is that one which belongs purely to the inner man; that is, the psychical line. It is obscure, and, indeed, can only be discovered and defined by an adept or a trained seer whose clairvoyance permits him to see that intangible yet powerful thread which has so much to do with our character. It is just as important as the physical descent, in fact more so, because it has to do with the ever-living man, whereas the physical tenement is selected by or follows upon the actions which the inner man compelled the former body to perform. So it may be altered at any time with ease if we live in obedience to the higher law.

Passing from the broad line of descent in a nation, we find each individual governed also by the family peculiarities and faults, and they are not as easy to define as those that are national, since few men are in possession of any facts sufficient to ascertain the general family tendencies.

Coming down now to ourselves, it is almost axiomatic that each one's mind acts in a way *peculiar to itself*. There is a tendency that daily grows stronger after our earlier years for the mind to get into a rut, its own rut or mode of looking at things and ideas. This is of great importance. For the man who has freed his mind so that it is capable of easily entering into the methods of other minds is more likely to see truth quicker than he who is fixed in his own ways.

We must then at once constitute ourselves our own critics and adversaries, for it is not often that anyone else is either willing or capable to take that part for us.

Our first step and the most difficult—for some, indeed, impossible—is to shock ourselves in such a manner that we may

quickly be able to get out of, or rather understand, our own mental methods. I do not mean that we must abandon all our previous training and education, but that we shall so analyze all our mental operations as to know with certainty, to easily perceive, the actual difference in method between ourselves and any other person. This is a thing seldom undertaken or accomplished by men nowadays. Each one is enamored of his own mental habits, and disinclined to admit that any other one can be better. When we have become acquainted with this mental path of ours, we are then in position to see whether in any particular case our view is false.

This is the psychological and metaphysical equivalent of that scientific process which classifies and compares so as to arrive at distinguishing differences in things in order that physical laws may be discovered. For while we remain in ignorance of the method and path of our mind's action, there is no way in which we can compare with other minds. We can compare views and opinions, but not the actual mechanics of the thought. We can hear doctrines, but are unable to say whether we accept or reject from right reasoning or because our peculiar slant on the mental plane compels us to ratiocinate wholly in accordance with a mental obliquity acquired by many years of hurried life.

The value of thus understanding our own mental bias so that we can give it up at will and enter into the bias of another's mind is seen when we consider that each of us is able to perceive but one of the many sides which truth presents. If we remain in the rut which is natural, we pass through an entire life viewing nature and the field of thought through but one sort of instrument. But by the other practice we may obtain as many different views of truth as the number of the minds we meet. When another human being brings his thoughts before us, we may not only examine them in our way, but also take his method and, adopting his bias for the time as our own, see just that much more.

It is very easy to illustrate this from ordinary life. The novelist sees in the drawing-rooms of society and the hovels of the poor only the material that may serve as the basis for a new book, while the social schemer drives thought of hovels away and sees in society only the means of gratifying pride and ambition, yet the artist can only think of the play of color and arrangement of figures, the harmony that delights his artistic sense.

The plain man of affairs is not attracted by the complex events of every day which have no relation to his business, whereas the student of Occultism knows that very obscure events point to other things yet in the future. In every stratum of society and every art or profession we constantly have it brought home to us that

each man looks at any subject from but one or two standpoints, and when a well-balanced mind is found looking at events and men and thoughts freely from all sides, everyone sees at once a superiority in the person, albeit they may not be able to explain it.

But it is in Theosophic study especially that it is wise for us to constitute ourselves our own critics and to adopt as far as possible the practice of leaving our own mental road and taking up some other. The truth is simple and not so difficult to arrive at if we will follow the advice of the Hindû *Upanishad* and cut away error. Error grows largely out of notions and preconceptions educated into us by our teachers and our lives.

The influence of these preconceptions is seen every day among those Theosophists who are seeking for more books to read upon Theosophy. Their minds are so full of old notions which are not violently expelled, that truth cannot be easily perceived. But if they read fewer new books and spent more time in re-reading those first attempted, meanwhile studiously endeavoring to enter into all of the author's thought, much more progress would be gained.

Take, for instance, the *Key to Theosophy*. It is full of all the main doctrines of the Wisdom-Religion, and of hints towards others. Many persons have read the book and then sought another. They say that they have mastered it. Yet if you put to them some questions or listen to their own, it is apparent that only that part of the work which in some way coincides with their own previous training and line of thought has been grasped. Now this is just the part they need not have dwelt upon, because, being like to themselves, it may at any time be understood. But if one will ever stand as one's own critic, then those parts which seem obscure will be attacked, and, being viewed from all sides, may be soon turned into a possession. And just because such has not been the practice, it has come to be the fact that some extremely valuable presentations of doctrine and philosophy remain buried in earlier Theosophical books and magazines, while those who once read them have gone feverishly on to other works and forgotten that which might have enlightened them.

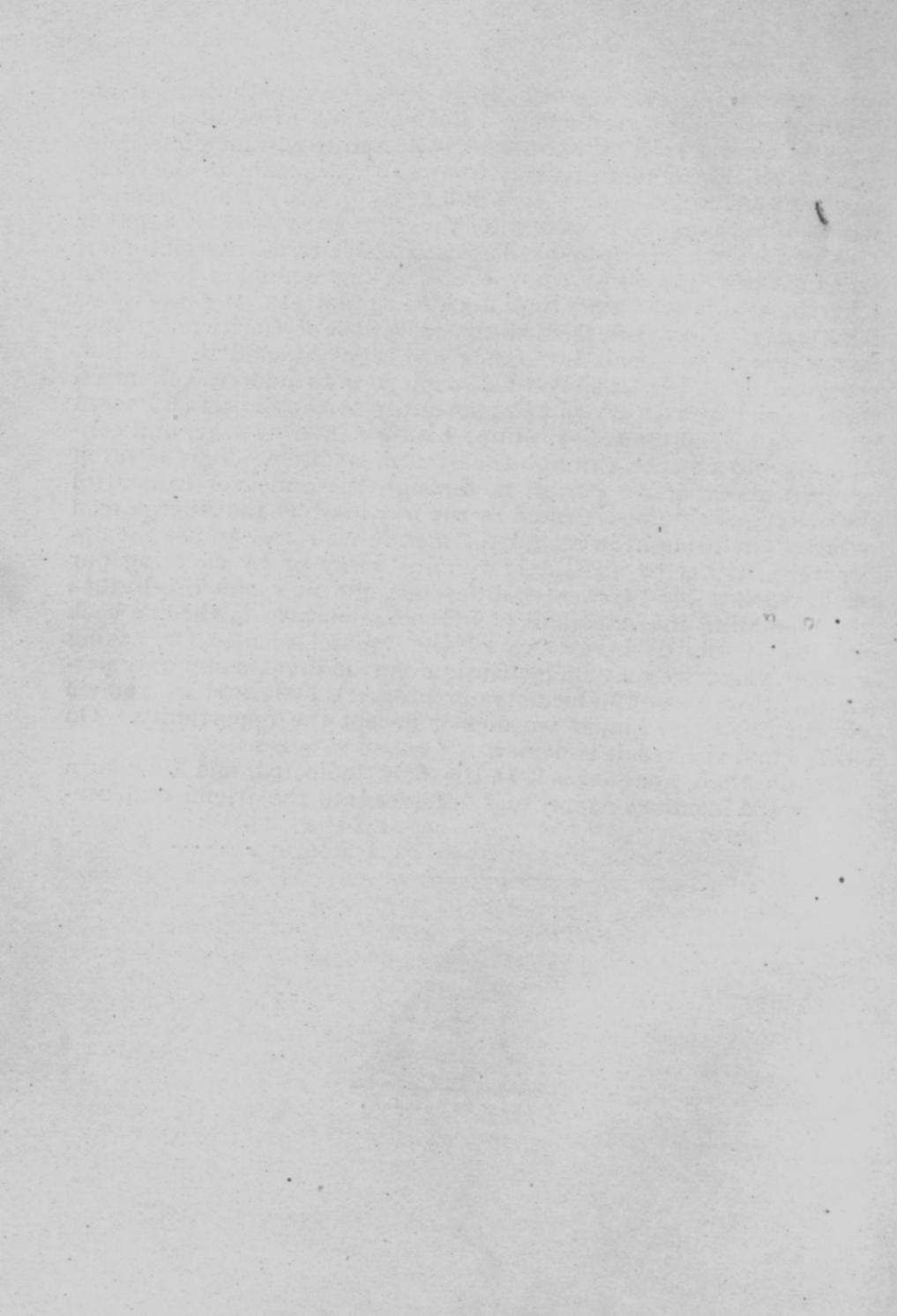
The Theosophist who delights to call himself practical and logical, an abhorrer of mysticism, should try to see what the mystical Theosophist means, and the mystic one should read carefully the words of the practical member to the end that he may counter-balance himself. A wholly practical or entirely mystical mind is not well balanced. And as long as the logical and practical man in our ranks scouts mysticism and never reads it, so long will he remain deformed and unbalanced in the eyes of those who see both

sides, because he is wrapped up in ideas and methods that are only right in their own domain. The attitude of mind proposed is not to be observed only toward our literature and the philosophy studied; it is to be that of every hour and applicable to our dealings with our fellow-men. It will lead us to discern the common failing of refusing to consider the thoughts expressed by another because his or her personality is disagreeable to us. Often in our ranks we can find those who never pay any attention to certain other members who they have decided cannot reason properly or talk clearly. Now aside from all considerations of charity and politeness, there is an occult law much lost sight of, and that is that everyone is led insensibly by Karmic law to address others on these topics and to afford an opportunity to the person addressed of taking a leap, so to say, out of his own favorite way, and considering life as seen through the eyes of another. This is often brought about, if we permit it, through the endeavor to control the irritation or dulness caused by the way in which the other person presents the thought in his mind. But if we refuse to use the opportunity, either by absolutely running away or by covering our minds with a hard coat of indifference, the new and bright idea just trembling into the field of our consciousness is thrown back and lost in the dark recesses of the mental plane. Or, taking another view, we may under Karmic law be the one and only person just then fitted to elucidate our brother's idea, and we remain still the debtor to him if we do not accept the opportunity. On either hand the result is demerit.

Let us, then, conquer self in the field indicated, and thus turn the inward insidious enemy and deceiver into the friend and constant guide.



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DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

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**Soul and Spirit.**

[Read at Brooklyn T. S. and Aryan T. S. in June, 1890, by H. T. Patterson.]

HERE is now amongst men a great tide of discontent, which is felt more than it is seen, and which is flowing underneath the surface currents throughout the entire civilized world. It is this which leads to so much world-illness and to so many suicides. The mass of mankind are beginning to more fully realize the shortness of this span of life from birth to death, and, realizing this, they are beginning to understand the inadequacy of wealth, or power, or study, or of all efforts for the acquirement of these as ends in themselves. This leads them to look longingly for, to discern, if possible, a larger span of existence, if perchance there be one. This larger span does exist, being the life of the soul, in which the life of the personality is but a short episode, as the life of the soul itself is but another short episode as compared with the life of the spirit. They are gradually, one by one, not only looking to this larger life, but here and there beginning to merge into it. It therefore behooves us to regard carefully its nature, its principles, its dangers, and its duties.

That the soul-life is something totally different from the life in matter is not plausible. To be sure, matter spoken of in regard to the soul, that is, the matter composing the soul and known to it, is much more subtle than matter as we know it. Perhaps the word "substance" would be a better word, but although it is not tangible to our physical senses, it is still something real, but real only to the higher senses. This we should bear constantly in mind, that it is useless for us to try to conceive of any being without some body.

The *Bhagavad-Gītā* is a compendium or synthesis of the principal

different preceding schools of the Hindûs. In the Thomson translation there is a long and carefully prepared introduction. In this is a keen insight shown into the various ideas of the different schools, but there is also a constant stultification of these ideas through the translator's habit of referring everything to his own preconceived notions, based on an apparently very external conception of truth as embodied in the Christian religion. Referring to the system of Kapila, he speaks as follows:

"From the moment of its emanating from the spiritual essence and its union with matter, the soul was supposed to be invested with a subtile body, which it never quits until the moment of final emancipation, or until the entire dissolution of all matter takes place. This body, called the Linga, or the Linga Sharira, is the vehicle in which the soul is borne from one region to another, thus solving the difficulty. It is material, although imperceptible. It is coëval with the soul, born with it and ceasing to exist at its emancipation, but never quitting it for a moment as long as it is subject to material existence, no matter in what sort of a substantial body the soul may be placed. . . . Perhaps the best idea which can be given of it is to compare it with our own childish notions of ghosts, with the phantoms or images of bodies in the Greek superstition, or with the mystic, non-material body with which some of the early Christians attempted, though evidently with error, to explain the resurrection. It cannot be called non-material, since it was composed of subtile elements, but it was incapable of direct affection from matter. Thus, when the substantial body is killed, the Linga, which exists within it, remains unhurt as the coating of the soul."

It is strange that Thomson, stating so clearly this idea, should not recognize its force and its correspondence with the teachings of St. Paul, who distinctly says there is a "spiritual body."

The higher life for which some of us are striving is just this life of the soul. Just as the association of human beings is much closer and more intimate than that of animals, necessitating a much higher degree of self-control, morality, and unselfishness, so is the life of the soul higher than that of the body, necessitating, likewise, a corresponding increase in self-control and unselfishness. There is nothing in the powers acquired through soul-development intrinsically good or bad, any more than there is anything good or bad, intrinsically, in material powers. The goodness or badness consists in the use to which they are put. It is therefore absolutely essential that before any one acquires these high powers he should have acquired such characteristics that he not only will not use them to his own ends, but cannot misuse them.

If we can imagine the human family with the bloodthirsty appetites and instincts of tigers, we can see how impossible it would be for them to live together in masses, as they do in our great cities of 1,000,000, 2,000,000, 3,000,000, and even 4,000,000 people. But through this highly organized life of our civilization, which is only possible in conditions with a suitable degree of moral advancement, each one has vastly more comfort, power to do and to get and to be, than he would otherwise have. In the sphere of the activity of the soul, the association is much closer, and the power to disturb or to hurt or to injure much greater, not only the intentional power, but also the unintentional power. An evil word or thought may send itself along the unseen currents and become a maleficent impulse, which has the power to injure innocent and unprotected people who are not in some way guarded against it, in a way that we little suspect. It is therefore easily understood why the mystic brotherhood are so opposed to the acquisition of psychic powers by anyone who has not become pure and unselfish through and through.

Thomson speaks of the system of Kapila as a philosophical, and that of Patanjali as a practical system. Of the latter he says;

"It will be sufficient to point out what every one will have already remarked, the great resemblance between these theories and the modern ideas of magnetism and mesmerism. The power of the mind, and still more of the will, over the body is too well known and ascertained to require even exemplification, but such it receives in the miracles fabled to be performed, and literally performed even to this day, by the yogis and fakirs of India. That a man in a complete state of mental abstraction, and after continual habituations and exercise of his body, should undergo without flinching, and without perhaps a pang, what would insure death under all ordinary circumstances, may be explained, but that the same abstractions and the same exercises should give transcendental powers to the soul or even to the mind, even less marvellous than those arrogated to it by the Hindū philosophers, is a subject of continual doubt, which every true Christian, at least, will approach with care. . . . It is a subject of which we would fain know more, for if we divest it of its mysticism, we venture to say that there will be found much truth at the bottom. If we arrogate for the Sankhya the honor of having systematized philosophical theories at an age when Greece could boast of nothing more advanced than a Lycurgus, or of anticipating by some three and twenty centuries the denial of a void in the enlightened West, we may, at least, call Patanjali the Mesmer, and more than the Mesmer, of India. Sufficient praise be it to the mystic old Brah-

man to have inferred amid darkness and ignorance the vast powers of the mind and will, and to have claimed for the soul a nobility capable of making the body, and even external matter, its slave."

The system of Patanjali, as is indicated above, shows the method by which psychic powers are to be attained. But fortunately for us, our attention has been and is being directed in this Society, more to the philosophy and a correct attitude than to any practical experimentation.

When one fully realizes that there is a soul-life, and that the soul is a real thing, and that its life is not a chimera, but is as real as the one which we have been living, with vastly more scope, then this small span of existence, measured by the length of incarnations, begins to lose for us its zest. It is the growing knowledge of the certainty of this greater span of life which is causing so many to turn with disgust from that from which the interest has on this account largely departed. Beyond the life of the soul is the life of the spirit, but, although we must recognize it, and must aim to get from it our aspirations, and must steadily endeavor to cultivate our pure intuitions, yet the plane of activity is not there, but on the plane below it, and on the one above this material plane.

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### Union of the Manas with the Buddhi.

[Read before the Aryan T. S. of New York, by Alexander Fullerton.]

**I** THINK that all of us who are as yet in the Infant Class of Occultism are somewhat uncertain as to the meaning of the injunction "Seek to unite the Manas with the Buddhi." What is the purport of this injunction, and what the process of compliance with it? Does it mean that these divisions of our seven-fold nature are not really such, and that we are to erase the line artificially drawn between two parts of one thing; or that the separation, though actual now, is abnormal and should be annulled; or that there is a real, permanent distinction, but that what needs correction is present hindrance to the mutual interaction of the two?

It seems to me that the last is probably the true interpretation, and that it may acquire some clearness by reference to two analogies in lower regions very familiar to us all. Perhaps there is nothing more common in social life than the divorce between intelligence and goodness. Not that the clever are always conscienceless, or the honest-hearted always dull; but that there is

no necessary connection between intellect and integrity. Some of the most sincere of men, firm in sense of duty and in resolution to perform it, ruled ever by the voice of conscience, guileless, trustworthy, exemplary, are intellectually contemptible, their brains confused and bungling, their opinions trumpery and their judgments worthless. We marvel at times how it is possible that they should fail to see distinctions as patent as a house or a tree, or why they get entangled along plain ways, or why they stumble about in uncertainties quite needless; and we become legitimately irritated at stupidities which bring discomfort to other people. As we in calm moments contemplate this class, we are conscious of two altogether distinct attitudes of mind towards them,—homage for their characters, contempt for their brains, and we wonder how men so good can be so feeble. As no one can by will create intelligence, the prescription for this class is probably a transfusion of the admittedly high motive over into the region of thought, where it will certainly stimulate and strengthen, perhaps even modify the barrenness.

But there is also a converse class. It is where there is unquestioned intelligence, even cleverness, and where there exists some degree of right motive and of spiritual effort, perhaps with very positive dogmatic convictions, yet the convictions wholly irrational and the conduct quite vacillating and inconsistent. One of the best historic illustrations is the famous Dr. Johnson, and we all remember the delightful passage in which Macaulay describes him as "celebrating the redemption of mankind with butterless buns and sugarless tea." But illustrations abound in private circles. I have in mind a sincerely devout woman of more than average ability, singularly endowed with sense of humor, really striving to be dutiful as she understands duty, deeply revering those Scriptural narratives (such as Jonah's whale and Baalam's ass) at which scoffers are apt to mock, and considering truth to be unattainable by all outside of a particular school of a particular church of a particular religion. This really good woman would for no inducement neglect her two Sunday services and two more during the week, though always going late to church and disturbing the congregation, besides being utterly heedless at all times of the rights of others. What is the prescription for *this* class? Evidently the converse to the former, *viz.* a transfusion of intelligence into the region of conscience, an application of rational thought to pure motive.

On the broad plateau occupied by the Theosophical Society, and from which starts upward the path which a member may enter or not as he likes, these same phenomena are manifested in a distinc-

tively Theosophical sphere. We have not a few real Theosophists whose spiritual nature is fine and strong, but whose mental capacity is small and poor. Like many devout souls in the religious sects around, they have so sincere a reverence for everything bearing a sacred name that they do not wait to question its genuineness or worth, but accord it instant welcome. Incapable of intelligent discrimination, and above all things eager for spiritual advance, they accept unhesitatingly any recipe for obtaining it. None seems fantastic or delusive if only it promises Divine enlightenment. And so we hear of aspirants for wisdom through the medium of diet or postures or respiration, through the mechanical repetition of words or sounds, through fancied communion with men dead for hundreds of years. Greek philosophers and Egyptian kings and modern ghosts unheard of while on earth are supposed to have no better occupation now than to guide the lives and further the destinies of imbeciles whom they would not notice if in the flesh. Meaningless meanderings or pretentious platitudes are viewed with reverential awe if only they appear in a spiritualistic journal or emanate from a spiritualistic séance. Now as, here again, the creation of intelligence is impossible, so, here again, the only prescription is the bringing over the spiritual forces into the region of mind, the exhibition of the sharp contrast between the impulse towards the Real and the incongruous channels through which it is working. Crossing the line, spirituality enters the domain of thought and dissipates the frivolity which there is too little intellect to expose.

Similarly in Theosophy as in social life, there is the converse class, those whose brain-power is vigorous and their spirituality weak. The rich treasures of knowledge so lately disclosed fascinate their minds, and the copious treatment of problems shirked or disavowed by Science assures them that at last all barriers to discovery are imaginary or factitious. They are thrilled, exhilarated, enthusiastic. They join the Theosophical Society as a possible avenue to further fact, and enjoy Theosophy as food to the intelligence. But of course this is only one aspect of its mission, and that the less important. There must be some disappointment if the complete development of being is supposed to come only through the intellect, and the intellect must itself be dwarfed if it is exercised only on the material side of things, on man and his worlds divorced from their higher bearings. And so the remedy would seem to be an entrance by thought into the region of spirit, a realization of what is meant by the loftiest part of man, a quickening of the Divine spark through perception of what it is and demands and foretells. Then the impulse towards perfection may

be wakened, and aspirations which were weak be fortified by an intelligence which is strong.

If we translate the idea embodied in these illustrations up to the plane of the higher intellects and the highest spiritual consciousness, we catch one part of the significance of the maxim "Unite the Manas with the Buddhi." Of course the Manas in its upper range must be a very different thing from that slow-moving power we call "mind." It has no need of ratiocination, of the syllogism, of any logical process or rhetorical rule. Accident never beclouds essence, distinctions are as evident as things. The narrow area of ordinary thought broadens till its limits are imperceptible. Mental props and aids and stimuli, necessary here, have become extinct; the whole machinery of illustration and analogy has dropped into uselessness. The far-reaching, deep-piercing eye of intuition sweeps through the realm of its habitat, instantaneously perceiving the truth which we now laboriously seek. And so, too, of the upper consciousness. It is not vague and transient and strained, as that alone we know, but precise, continuous, facile. Its range has enormously increased; it moves through the different zones of being, sensing their distinctions and fineness and interactions. Seeing the Divine everywhere, it revels in that universal presence, and yet ever looks up to the reachless Sun from which all light proceeds. In harmony with all being, no discord distracts its calm or palsies its movement. Like the light which symbolizes it, it is a gentle, pervasive, mighty force.

Still, these two distinct potencies need union. Intuition has to be spiritualized, spirituality has to be made wisdom. Fused, inter-pervading, mated, they form that combination which is the nearest approach to the Divine, and which does ever approach nearer and nearer as veil after veil uplifts. No human eye can explore the path, no human imagination depict it.

At the beginning of this paper it was said that there is a second analogy on this lower plane which facilitates an apprehension of the maxim "Unite the Manas with the Buddhi." It is in the familiar fact that repeated actions become habitual, the voluntary turning in time to the automatic. A child learns to walk. Every step is toilsome and uncertain, but at last each muscle learns its proper function, and the little one is henceforth emancipated forever from a slavery which would have absorbed its attention. The same child learns to read. At first each letter is separately noted and their combinations studied out, but as the eye and mind are trained they take in more and more rapidly words and sentences, till with one quick sweep the reader catches the meaning of a whole paragraph. Not a letter or a word has escaped sight

and consequent transmission to the brain, yet the whole mechanical function has become so spontaneous that all attention has vanished from the mechanism and become concentrated on the thought. The same child learns piano music. Slowly and tediously the single notes are mastered, and then the growing suppleness of the fingers, together with the development of simultaneous movements in the brain, makes possible slight combinations, then simple airs, then complicated harmonies, till in time the maestro flashes his ten powers over the keys, marvellous in complexity and in quickness, not a note mistaken, not a chord miscalculated, not a touch misjudged. And yet every note represents a brain impulse, and every chord a brain calculation,—all unconscious except in their totality, all the result of slow transmuting of separated volition into combined automatonism. There is perhaps no better illustration of such metamorphosis than a Rubinstein or a von Bulow.

One difficulty of raising human beings from a flesh-clogged existence to a spiritualized life is in the fact that the battle against the lowering influences has to be perpetually fought. If one well-directed blow at an impulse to selfishness or sensuality made an end of it, progress would be easy enough. But the fable of Antæus shows what strength may be acquired by renewed contact with earth, and so these earth-born passions, felled and bruised, rise afresh for another onslaught. Over and over and over again the man intent on liberation has to repeat the struggle, and it is only as the action of the higher impulses becomes habitual that it becomes easy. We are told, and can well believe, that a Mahâtma has grown inaccessible to temptation. All such struggles have long been past; there is nothing in his aims or tastes to which any low motive can appeal. The fleshly impulses lost their fierceness as they were ever beaten down, and the spiritual habitude grew fixed as it grew continuous. For not only was each atom of strength transferred from the carnal to the spiritual as the repeated contests ended always alike, but there came gradually an attitude which hardly needed volition, and at last could dispense with it.

With us beginners the application of the Buddhi and the Manasic principles to each other is a matter of incessant repetition. On the side of aspiration, there must be an often check when some unreasonable expectation, some partial view, needs correction or revise. Then the forces of intelligence must be turned on into the area of spirit, allowed their proper function in rectifying error. Good intentions, blunderingly acted out, thus are diverted into useful channels; right motives, vitiated through ignorance, made

beneficent to self and all. And on the side of mind, there must be an often rebuke when memory delights to recall scenes which can only degrade, or imagination pictures pleasures which paralyze progress. The measureless influence of thought is constantly dwelt upon by occult writers, and avowedly to induce us so to purify and elevate it that it shall impel, not hinder, us on the path. And this is accomplished as spiritual consciousness is made to pass through the mind, calming, cleansing, uplifting it. Often and often and often these reciprocal services need repetition; daily, perhaps hourly, the will of the aspirant after emancipation has to force his intelligence upon his aspiration or his aspiration upon his intelligence, for what is necessary has not yet become spontaneous. Yet it may become so. For as the toddling infant merges into the runner, and the lisping child into the reader, and the learner of scales into the musician, so the advancing Theosophist ever approaches the region where the exclusion of evil thought is now involuntary and the correction of erroneous impulses automatic.

What this becomes in its perfection, what is the completed union of the Buddhi with the Manas, the conception of an Adept may reveal to us.



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GENERAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE, P. O. Box 2659.

## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

NEW YORK, OCTOBER, 1890.

### **Evolution and Involution.**

[*A Paper read before the Brooklyn and Aryan T.S., by Miss E. B. Hooper.*]

**S**TANZA III of the ancient *Book of Dzyan* says in speaking of the "Web of Being" or the Kosmos, "Father-Mother spin a web whose upper end is fastened to Spirit, the light of the one Darkness, and the lower one to Matter, its shadowy end; and this web is the Universe spun out of the two substances made in one." And one of our great western poets, Goethe, wrote—

"Thus at the roaring loom of time I ply,  
And weave for God the garment thou see'st Him by."

In approaching the subject of Evolution it is necessary at the outset to establish a point of departure from which evolution began; nothing can evolute from nowhere to anywhere, though our Positivist friends find nothing illogical in the proposition. They have found a way to evolute nothing to nowhere—to their own satisfaction—a method of treating the life problem which to a Theosophist's mind is unthinkable. The last analysis that we can make in our efforts to discover the Great Cause of all life and being is to the Unknowable, and it is from the Unknowable that Evolution began. The term "Unknowable" must not be confounded with nonentity, for that is exactly the position of the Atheist and the Positivist, from which we differ. The word is used to express a thought so stupendous that the human mind fails utterly in realising even its shadow. It is the Divine Unknowable.

In the *Laws of Menu* the condition of the Unknowable before the beginning of Evolution is most concisely described. The old book of the Hindûs says: "This universe existed only in the first divine idea yet unexpanded, is if involved in darkness, imperceptible, undefinable, undiscoverable by reason, and undiscovered by revelation, as if it were wholly immersed in sleep."

Let us cast ourselves forward into time and try to imagine the return of all spirit and matter to their source, the Divine Idea. We are now no longer here in this room, we are far away in space; our physical life is done with, gone; it has evaporated into a finer essence. Our consciousness which in objective life was individualized into narrow personal love, has widened and deepened in its great brotherhood until it embraces and is merged in all humanity, and there is no longer separateness in the sense of selfishness. Man has risen to his sixth principle and become the Spiritual Soul, and those entities who have failed (for there are always those that fail,) have already passed into night to await a new day and a fresh start. Remember that the earth becomes, develops to its material apex, and fades in perfect consonance with the evolution of the human being, so that, when man is done with his material body, the earth is disintegrating and sinking into sleep. There is no longer any material, objective earth. Think; as the life of a man, so the life of an atom; and by inversion, as the life of earth, so the life of the Kosmos. Our universe with its myriads of worlds, and the universes beyond, of which the astronomer Flammarion writes with such surety and delicacy in his *Uranie*, one and all rise and fall with the same law. They are dying, dead. We are standing on the confines of time; all objectively is passing, past: we stand, denuded of all illusion, in our Spiritual Soul: we are the Over-Soul.

I have found but one figure that can express this idea to me, and that is a hollow cone. Let *A* represent the Absolute, the Divine Idea; *B*, Spirit, or as the orientalist names it, Purusha; *c*, Matter, called Prakriti in the East. Imagine the cone to be plastic substance, the lowest rim continually evaporating into finer substance and continually rising upward within the cone to *A*, just as if the cone were wood, and in burning were rising in flame and vapor. Now, then, the cone will slowly consume itself until *B* and *c* (Spirit and Substance) will have completely disappeared, and in their purest essence have risen to *A*, the Infinite One. There are no longer any sides to the figure; there is no longer any figure; there is simply a dot.

Universal objectivity has returned to its essence yet unexpanded. Let us repeat the stanza quoted from the *Laws of Menu*, and then we shall have clearly before us the point at which evolution began.

The only symbol I have found to represent this idea is the dot:



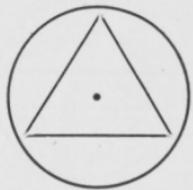
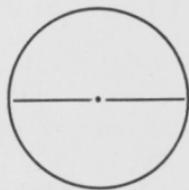
That sleep of Brahm lasts for thousands and millions of years, as long as his day, the period of the Evolution and Involution of Cosmogony.

“Awakening at the end of his night, the unborn creates the universe anew,” says the *Vishnu Purana*. The divine idea begins to expand. Imagine that dot expanding, thrilling into life, and it will be a palpitating circle with the dot, the divine idea, still in the center. In the circle we have the symbol of spirit and celestial matter unseparated, existing in divine, latent consciousness—if you can imagine such a state. During one day of Divine Being, *i. e.*, countless ages to us, Spirit and ethereal matter filled space in their undifferentiated form. That great sea of vibrating consciousness is feminine; it is the first celestial mother of all things. The Genesis of the Bible expresses it in these words: “And darkness was upon the face of the deep; the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

This idea, with slight variation of expression, opens the book of Evolution in every religion, Genesis of the Mosaic Law, the Chaldean Cosmogony, the *Book of the Dead* of Egypt, and the *Puranas* of India. In the last phrase, “the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters,” there is a change. Spirit and Celestial Matter are separating, though not as finite beings separate, for they are not differentiated, but two aspects of the same thing. The disc of the circle represents Prakriti, Celestial Matter, or the face of the waters, and the dot within is unmanifested Spirit, or Purusha. Give the dot extension, let it move upon the face of the waters, and we have the symbol, the hoary symbol, of “immaculate Mother-Nature within Infinitude.” (*Secret Doctrine*, p. 4, vol. 1.)

The Spirit in ceaseless motion over the face of the waters is the Breath of Life, the Word spoken of in Genesis and all sacred books. The fusion of the two is Akâza, of which ether is the lining or material manifestation.

This brings us to the next stage in Evolution, the radiation of light from utter Darkness, the ecstatic thrill of motion throughout the infinitude of Space. That transcendent light pervading Space is the Akâza, the son of Spirit and Celestial Matter, from which truism we, like the ancient Magi, draw the symbol. Now we have Space, the Word, and Light a heaven of divine sound and effulgent Light, and there



is wondrous beauty in any conception, no matter how faint, that human mind can form of that state of Kosmos before its evolution into materiality.

The Akâsa born of Spirit and Matter is the same as Fohat, ethereal, dynamic electricity, the link between Purusha and Prakriti. Imagine it sweeping through the universe of Light, Sound, and delicate substance, in a whirl of electric vibration. Can you not see the star-mist rising? The longer the Akâsa exists consciously separate from the Absolute, the more material it becomes, and in its newly-evolved form it is the cosmic dust of modern science.

We have now Sound, Light, Substance, and from that triad comes Akâsic star-matter, from which our solar system and the universe of suns will be generated.

All these forces are unintelligent, for though possessing a consciousness of their own—as every existing emanation has—they have no intelligence.

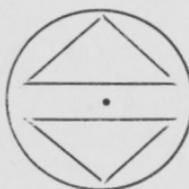
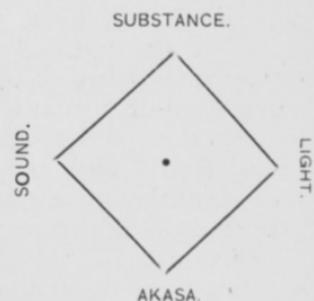
Now I must take you back with me some millions of years, as I carried you forward before.

You and I and everyone in this room—to go no further—are developing upwards—I will not presume to suggest that any of us can be headed the other way—and when the last word of evolution and involution is said, what will we be? Masters alike of our own natures and of the forces of mother nature, when this great universe of which we form a part, goes to rest, what becomes of us? We, too, sleep. For it is said in the Vayu Purana that "when the Maha Pralaya (or great sleep) arrives the various orders of celestial spirits and Gods" rest "in their subtle forms, destined to become re-embodied, in similar capacities as their former, when the world is renewed at the beginning of the succeeding Kalpa."

It is these Gods and celestial spirits, developed in past æons of time from men, by their own will and effort, who are the objective intelligences that guide the beginnings and evolution of man and

the lower orders of being; it is they who are the Architects of the universe, the mighty builders; it is they that wield the fearful forces of Akâsa under the divine laws of the Infinite Absolute. It is they who were our progenitors, and it is such as they that we are destined to become—if we so will it.

With the awakening of the Elohim, the Sephiroth, the Prajapati, as these architects are named in different relig-

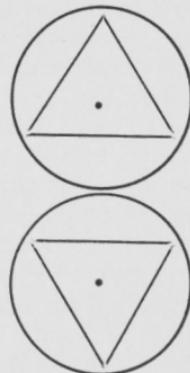


ions, we reach the 6th stage of Evolution, and in the reflection of the Spirit triad in the Sephiroth on a more material plane, we have this symbol representing to us the existence and life of the flame-born sons or Archangels, which are the highest Beings on the scale of existence.

It is from one of this highest Septenary that our solar system received its life impulse and guiding influence. What their work is, how conceived or shaped, is beyond our vision, but that they exist and are a mighty motor in our evolution is perfectly logical; it is, indeed, as indispensable to the whole as the centre of a circle is to its circumference.

We must not lose sight of the fact that though the 1st divine triad, which is 1, remains the same, unchangeable and indestructible, the emanation of that triad, the electric soul of the universe, the Akâza, has begun its differentiation and is ready to be used by the seven Builders in its three forms of ether, fire, and dynamic force, which with Cosmic Dust are the basic quaternary upon which the universe is built.

To express the evolution of these agencies most concisely, I will quote Stanza III of the book of the *Dzyan*, upon which the *Secret Doctrine* is written. "Light is cold flame, and flame is fire, and the fire produces heat, which yields water, the water of life in the great mother." So that now we have the seven Architects and the five forces with which they work. Slowly, age by age, the universe is rising in the deeps of space. Star-mist is aggregating, condensing, fusing. The soul song of nature is throbbing as that ceaseless motion pulses through sun and atom, and the heavenly bodies take form in rhythmic flow and make the starry spaces through which we look. But the material universe as we know it is not there yet; we have reached only the 6th stage of the first æon. At the beginning of the seventh there differentiated still another septenary of Celestial intelligences, that so many races, including the Jews, have taken for their Gods, their conception of the Divine All. This septenary is the symbol. And now the worlds are ready, and with the awakening of intelligences beyond the human begins the evolution of man, destined if he himself so will it to rise to heights that make the brain dizzy. Very little is told us of those first three races, only the merest skeleton is given us now, but the fragment is most suggestive and quite enough for us to begin upon.



The dual nature of man and his evolution simultaneously upon two planes at the least is the first fact we come to. The physical and psychical man—I do not say spiritual man because that is as yet considerably beyond us—evolute and involute the one from the other.

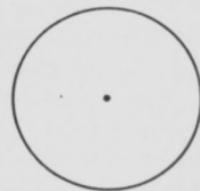
Life had developed on many planes, through many ages on this earth, before there was the beginning of man, and when he did come it was the sort of man you and I would never think of speaking to or even recognizing. I am very sure that we would not even have seen him, for he was clothed in an astral form lent to him by the Pitris. We could not have stood upon the earth, or breathed its atmosphere in its then state, for ether, earth, and man were in a very thin, slimy condition. Had we been dropped upon the earth, as we are to-day, we should probably have gone through the crust and come through the other side, to drop out into space—a most uncomfortable proceeding.

In describing the evolution of the first three races, the most direct way of expressing it would be that the first was formed by ideation and will, somewhat as we create forms of art through our minds and will, and its symbol is one we already know; and this reminds me that I read somewhere to-day that in his *Phaedras* Plato—who, as you know, was an Initiate—speaks “of a winged race of men.” You can imagine that if a circular man had to move, nature would soon develop wings for him and he would be the Egyptian scarabœus, a winged globe. And that brings us to the fact that man of the first race had but one faculty, and that was motion; all else lay latent in him.

Nature became more material still, and the second race men were produced as many plants produce, by budding, simple differentiations; in that race man was androgynous.

With each race a principle and its physical sense were developed, but it will be best to leave that branch of evolution for a paper to itself, for there is an immense field to be covered there.

There is a mystery in the third race. Sons of Wisdom, intelligent monads whose time was come to people the earth, came. They saw the puerile forms of the first two races into which they must incarnate, and, as the *Book of Dzyan* says, they refused to incarnate, choosing to wait for forms more fitting. In that lies the sin of which all religions speak. They chose to wait, and in consequence the mindless beings which were developing the form of men fell, and the horror of a mindless animal race peopled the earth. The ape is simply a degenerated man, and whole races



of unspiritual animal men have come from that selfish choice of the Sons of Wisdom. Those that had done the wrong came back and saw. They straightway started to repair the wrong. And it is from them that man has received his mind and soul. Thus you see the two strains running side by side, the physical man first, and then the spiritual as the Breath of Life was breathed into him.

The fourth race developed speech, and it was not until this race that the Manas, the vehicle of mind, became an abiding principle in man.

From this point through the fifth race evolution of man becomes more complicated. There is not only the physical with its senses and powers, but the conscious ego of mind and will, which, though complicated with it, is quite separated from the body.

This ego proceeding from the divine contains in itself, latent, all psychic and spiritual forces. Here begins Involution.

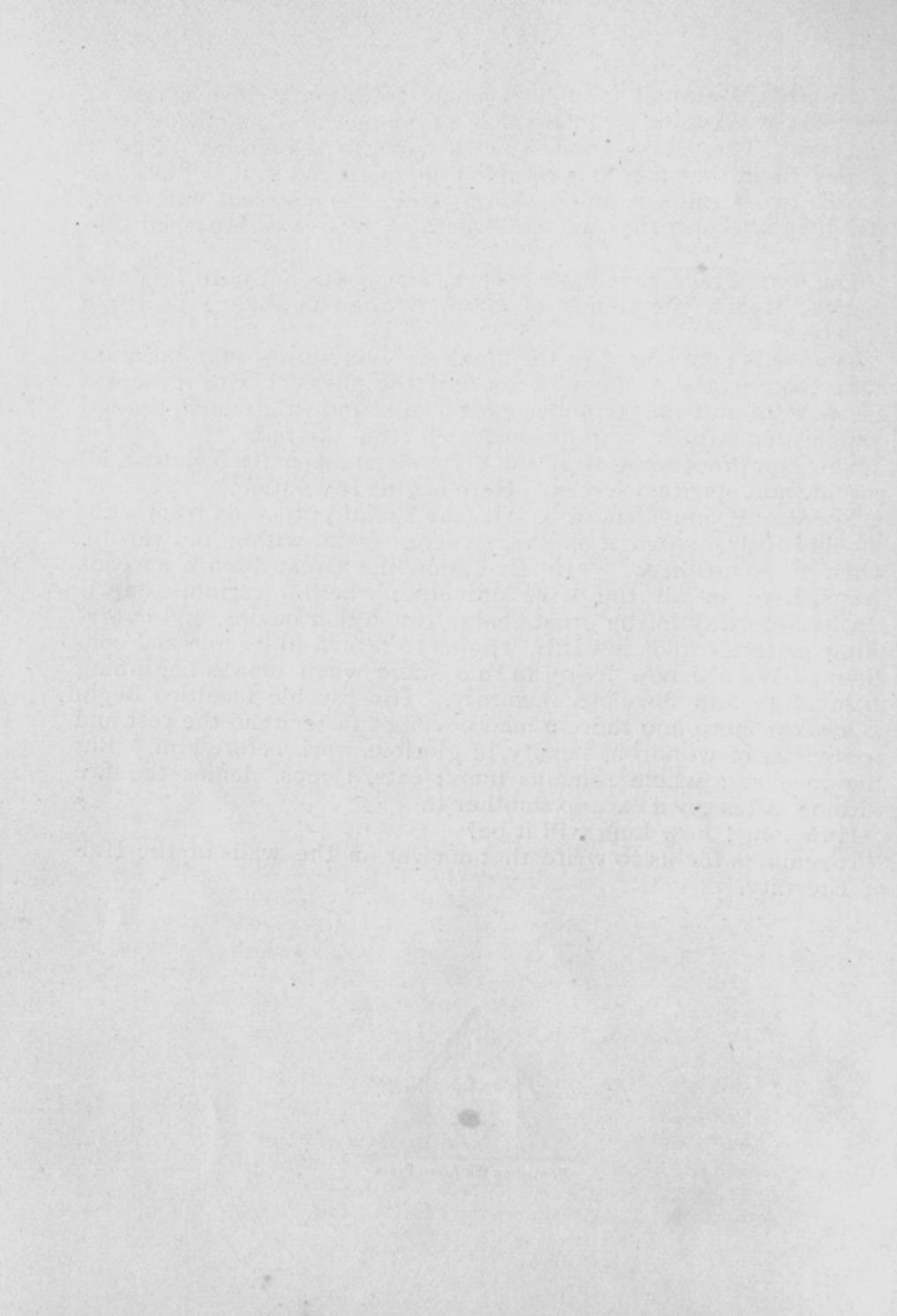
The Occult catechism says, "It (the Breath) proceeds from without inwardly, when it is everywhere, from within outwardly, when it is nowhere." In Evolution the Great Breath spreads everywhere in all the wide universe: when a certain time is reached midway in the great chain, Involution begins, and everything material folds inwards, begins to return to its spiritual condition. We are now living in that stage when man is beginning to involute and develops inwardly. His psychic faculties begin to awake; here and there a man develops faster than the rest and sees vistas of wondrous beauty, of glorious work before him. But the race as a whole remains inert; eats, sleeps, denies the fire within; takes good care to smother it.

How long! how long will it be?

It remains for us to write that answer on the walls of the Hall of Eternity.



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# THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: AMERICAN SECTION.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE, P. O. Box 2659.

## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER, 1890.

[Neither the Theosophical Society nor any officer thereof is responsible for the contents of any Paper in this series.]

### **Theosophical Study and Work.**

THE birth and life of a Branch of the Theosophical Society are very like to those of an individual. As with persons so with a body of theosophists engaged in theosophical endeavor and study, the parentage and the subsequent environment have much to do with the continuance of life and with the power of the influence exerted over the units which compose the association, as well as that which radiates from the Branch to others outside. And in a Theosophical Society its authorship is divided among all those who come together in order to start and carry it on. If the authors of its being are unintelligent, or confused, or uncertain, or self-seeking in the formation of the Society, its life and work will be the same. Growth will be stopped, influence hindered, and results—nothing. The work and influence of a Branch hinge upon the knowledge of theosophical doctrine, upon the motives, ideas, and ideals of the members, and so we have to consider what is the knowledge required and what should be the aims, ideas, and ideals of those who form and are to work in a Branch T. S. An inquiry should also be made into the methods which ought to be adopted as well as those that are to be avoided.

The work of a Branch has two objective points where it is intended, in the theosophical order of things, that its help and influence are to be felt. The first is in and among its members, and the other upon that portion of the world which lies within its perview. If, as I firmly believe, the theory of universal brotherhood is based upon a law—a fact—in nature that all men are spiritual beings who are indissolubly linked and united together in one vast whole, then no Branch, no individual theosophist, can be regarded as with-

out significance and influence, nor is any member justified in supposing that he or she is too obscure, too unprogressed, to be of any benefit to the movement and thus to mankind at large.

The fact that a branch T. S. is a body of individuals makes stronger the certainty that by means of the subtle link which, under the law of unity, connects together all the men who are on this planet, a wider and more potent influence for good or evil may be exerted through a Branch than through any single individual. For just as a man is composed of atoms descended to him in various lines from many forefathers, all of which have a part in the influence he exerts, so a Branch is a being composed of the atoms—its members—included within its borders. And it is no fancy, no fantastic dream, to say that this being may be intelligent, or forceful, or weak, or wicked as a whole, just as it is made the one or the other by its component parts. And the declarations made by the adepts respecting individual theosophists should have weight with such a body. Those Beings have said that each member can aid the movement by explaining its fundamental doctrines or at least by doing away with misconceptions, and that no single unit in the whole should be so ignorant as to suppose that he or she has a special karma of his own unconnected with the rest. Not a single good example in theosophic life is lost. They say, but every one of us affects not only the immediate associates but also projects into the great universal current an influence that has its weight in the destiny of the race. Some of these golden words are as follows:

“Let not the fruit of good karma be your motive; for your karma, good or bad, being one and the common property of all mankind, nothing good or bad can happen to you that is not shared by many others. Hence, if the motive be for yourself it is selfish and can only generate a double effect—good and bad—and will either nullify your good actions or turn them to some other man's profit. “There is no happiness for one who is ever thinking of self and forgetting other selves.”

This is all applicable to a Branch in its totality, for it is an intelligent being quite as much under the government of karma as any individual. It will feel the karma of its actions, and the responsibility will rest upon the members who have neglected or obeyed the dictates of theosophic duty. And the karma of the entire international body will react upon it for benefit or the reverse, according to the good, bad, or indifferent karma which the Branch may have acquired by its course of action. It is a part of the whole, and no portion can be exempt from the influences belonging to the total mass of workers. Thus a Branch which has been indiffer-

ent, or selfish, or full of doubt or disloyalty regarding the ideals it promised to follow, will attract out of the international theosophic karma just enough to accentuate its weakness and doubt, and on the other hand a Branch which has worked hard, unselfishly, and earnestly will attract the good from the whole sum of karma, and that, added to its own, will enable it to resist bad effects and will further strengthen the vital-elements in its own corporate body.

The good or bad karma of the whole Theosophic Society may be figured as surrounding it from one end of the world to the other in the shape of layers or spheres of light or darkness. The light is good karma and the darkness is bad. Those units—Branches—which contain the elements of light within them will attract from the sphere of light as much of that as they are capable of holding, and the darkness will be drawn in by those which have darkness already. Thus we are all, theosophically speaking, keepers and helpers of each other, not only in the United States but in England, in Bombay, in Calcutta, in Madras. If we do not do our duty it may happen that some struggling Branch in some far off place will by reason of its newness or weakness be the recipient, not of help but of damage from us. Each Branch is separately responsible for its own actions, and yet every one is helped or injured by every other. These reciprocating influences work on the real though unseen plane where every man is dynamically united to every fellow man. And I am not uncharitable in saying that if the Indian Branches had worked more for the far-distant United States when it was unable to stand alone, we should now be the possessors of more in the way of elucidation and statistics and other aids from that far-distant land than we can show. But even if the early-formed United States' Branches had worked with more zeal and energy toward the real ends of the Society, we should have been able earlier to materially aid and comfort our sincere brother and sacrificing worker, Col. H. S. Olcott. And now the newer Branches of the Society in this country have a better opportunity than others in the past, for all the fighting has been done and much work is ready to their hand.

So the most obscure has a place in the scheme as important as the one that is large and well known, while those that are lazy or doubting or selfish must compensate some time or another for their acts of commission, as well as for any failure to add to the general sum of good.

With this in view we may conclude that a single Branch has the power to efficiently aid and benefit not only its members but also the whole theosophic body corporate. This may be made clearer

by remembering how often in the history of the world a family or even a man has sometimes been for the nation or race a power for the greatest good or evil.

Under this doctrine of unity and selfishness the work of a Branch ought to be entered into by all the members with an unselfish spirit which will lead them to have patience with the weaker brethren, for a chain is no stronger than its weakest link, and therefore endeavor should be made to bring to the minds of the weakest the truths that the others see with less difficulty. And next, every individual, by eliminating the desire to get knowledge for himself, will thereby make the Branch as a whole open and porous to the unseen but real and powerful influences managed from behind the scenes by the great personages who have as a part of their work in the world the theosophic movement, and who are constantly at work among us for the purpose of aiding those who are sincere and unselfish. If the testimony of those who have been long in the Society is to be believed, then, as they assert, there are among us every day many disciples (who are known in our literature by the name of "Chelas") who are engaged in fanning the flame of spiritual illumination wherever they find it among the members. Their influence is not exerted because of wealth or personal prominence, but upon any one of any class who has tried to understand theosophy for the sake of others and in order that he may communicate to others in his turn. Not only has this been asserted by the leaders in the movement, but in the experience of many of us we have seen help extended to those who are in earnest for their fellow-man.

And this is peculiarly and more strongly applicable to those members who have as one of their aims the acquisition of psychic and abnormal powers. These powers cannot be safely found and used by the man who desires them for himself, and his mere statement in his heart or in words that he desires them for others goes for naught unless the deeper and inner motive and object coincide with the high one which is expressed. Our members, new and old, might as well become acquainted with the bald and naked truth on this subject now, as to wait for years of bitter experience to burn it into them. There are such powers and man may acquire them, but each age and each race has its limitations that it is not possible for the average man to overcome. Hardly any member who has desires for these would admit that he would be willing to become a black magician in order to acquire them, that is, would sacrifice his chances for emancipation for their sake. Yet without altruism one cannot get them except as a black magician. One has to deliberately make up his mind that he will sacrifice everything

and everybody else to his design if it is his intention to obtain them without following the rules laid down by the White Adepts inculcating truth, purity, charity, and all the virtues—in fact, altruism. There is no secret about the fact that two ways and no more lie open to the one who wishes for the powers of an adept, and those are on the right hand, that of virtue and altruism, and on the left—the black side—that of intense and unrelenting selfishness. No compromise, no mere dabbling, is allowed or possible, and more so in the selfish path, for there every one's hand is against every other one; none will help at any crisis, and, when the hour arrives that the student in that school is in peril from the unseen and terrible forces of nature, his companions on the road will but sneer at his weakness and rejoice at his downfall. And, indeed, the line of demarcation between these two ways, for students of the grade of most of the members of our Society, is very thin. It is like the hair line which the Mohamedan mystic says divides the false from the true. One has to be very careful so as to know if his motive is really so unselfish as he pretends it to himself to be. But it can always be tested by the reality of the feeling of brotherhood that he has in him. A mere intellectual longing to know and to discover further in this field is selfish and of the black variety, for unless every desire to know the truth is in order that one may give it to others, it is full of taint. Moreover, it will lead to no powers and to no real knowledge, for success in either side depends upon the burning of desire in the heart. With the white school this is for the sake of fellow-man, and on the dark hand the same fierce desire is for self alone.

Many persons, however, think that they can belong to the Society, and while negatively selfish, that is, ready and willing to sit down and hear others expound theosophical doctrine and never work for the body themselves, they may receive benefit in the way of comprehension of the doctrines of man and nature which are promulgated among us. But they forget a law in these matters of great importance, one, indeed, that they may not be willing to admit, and which is much opposed to our modern ideas of the powers and functions of the human mind. It is that such an attitude by reason of its selfishness builds up a hard wall between their minds and the very truths they wish to know. I speak of an actual dynamic effect which is as plain to the eye of the trained seer as is any object to the healthy eye.

We have been so accustomed for many years to vague ideas about the human mind, what it is, and what its powers really are, that people in general have no definite notion whether there be or not any material effect in the human economy from thoughts, or

whether they are like what is usually called "imagination," a something very unreal and wholly without objectivity. But it is a fact that the mind of the selfish person is always making about itself a hard reflecting surface which throws off and away from its grasp the very knowledge the man himself would take if he but knew the reason why he fails.

This brings us naturally to the proposition that the aims of the members in a Branch should be to eradicate selfishness and to promulgate and illustrate the doctrine of universal brotherhood, basing the explanation upon the actual unity of all beings. This of itself will lead to the explanation of many other doctrines, as it underlies them all, great and small. And in order to do this the members ought to study the system as a whole, so that its parts may be comprehended. It is for the want of such study that we so often hear members, when asked to explain their theosophy, saying, "Well, to tell the truth, I know how it all is, but am not able to make it clear to you." They are not clear because they have not taken the time and trouble to learn the few fundamental propositions and how to apply them to any and every question.

A very common error is the supposition that new men, new enquirers, can be converted to theosophy and brought into its ranks by taking up and enforcing phenomena. In the term "phenomena" I include all such as spiritualism, clairvoyance, clairaudience, psychometry, hypnotism, mesmerism, thought-reading, and the like. These convert but few if any, because there is not much known about them and so many proofs are required before belief is induced. And even a belief in these things gives no sound basis of a theosophical character. A perfect illustration of this is seen in the history of H. P. Blavatsky, who for many years has permitted phenomena to occur with herself for the benefit of certain specific persons. These have been talked about by the whole world, and the Psychical Society saw fit to send a man to look into them after they had taken place, but although the very persons who saw them happen testified to their genuineness, they were denied by him and all laid to fraud and confederation. Everyone who was inclined from the first to believe in them continued to so believe, and those who never believed remained in the same state as before.

The best attested phenomena are ever subject to doubt so long as the philosophy on which they depend is not understood.

Furthermore, the mass of men and women in the world are not troubled about phenomena. These they think can be left alone for the present because more pressing things engage their attention and call for solution. The great problems of life; why we are

here, why we suffer, and where may justice be found that will show the reason for the sufferings of the good man, or, indeed, for the sufferings of any one, press upon us. For each man thinks he is unjustly borne hard upon by fate when his cherished plans go for nothing, or his family is carried off by death, or his name is disgraced by a wayward child, or why, as is very often the case, he is unjustly accused and injured by his fellow-men. There are many who find themselves born poor when others less worthy are rich, and they ask why it is all thus and get no reply from the common religious systems of the day. It is life and its sorrows that destroy our peace, and every human heart wants to know the reason for it.

We must therefore offer theories that will give the answer, and these theories are the great doctrines of karma and reincarnation. These show justice triumphant in the world, meting out reward or punishment as it is deserved in any state of life. After an experience of fifteen years in the Society's work I have seen that more good and useful men and women have been attracted to our movement by these doctrines than have ever come to it by reason of phenomena, and that a great many have left our ranks who began on the phenomenal side. The members in general may not be aware of the fact that when the Society was formed the greater number of its New York members were spiritualists and that they nearly all left us long ago.

There is a mysterious power in these doctrines of karma and reincarnation which at last forces them upon the belief of those who take them up for study. It is due to the fact that the ego is itself the experiencer of rebirth and karma and has within a clear recollection of both, and rejoices, as it were, when it finds the lower mind taking them up for study. Each person is the concentration and result of karma, and is compelled from within to believe. The ethics of theosophy as enforced and illuminated by these twin doctrines should therefore be the object of our search and promulgation.

Furthermore, this course is authorized, for those who believe in the Adepts, by their words written about us. I quote:

“It is the insatiable craving for phenomena made so often degrading that has caused you so much trouble. Let the Society henceforth flourish upon its moral worth and the study of philosophy and ethics put into practice.”

The next question is how to carry all this out in practice.

First, by having the Branch open to the public and never private.

Second, by regular attendance and meetings.

Third, by establishing a library, at first with the few important books, which few can be added to by the members from time to time through donations of books which they have read.

Fourth, by always having an article, original or otherwise, for reading and discussion. If literary talent is not available, its want can be supplied from the great quantity of articles which have come out in the Society's magazines during the last fifteen years. In those nearly every subject of theosophical interest has been written upon and explained. They can be looked up with very little labor, and used at each meeting. And they can be carried on upon settled lines so as to go over each subject fully. It will be found that nearly all the questions that now puzzle new members have been at one time or another illustrated and explained in these articles.

Fifth, by a careful elementary study of our doctrines from one or two books until the main outline of all is grasped. Take, for instance, *Esoteric Buddhism*. This gives the system in the main, and many persons have read it, but a great many of those have done this but once. For them there often arise questions they might easily solve if they had made the system as a whole a part of their mental furniture. This book can be corrected by the *Secret Doctrine*, in which Mme Blavatsky has said that *Esoteric Buddhism* is in the main correct, and she gives the means for supplying its deficiencies. Then there is that most useful book, *Five Years of Theosophy*, containing some of the most valuable articles that appeared in the *Theosophist*.

Sixth, by a method of discussion which does not permit any one person in the Branch to assert that his or her views are the correct ones. We cannot get at truth by assertion, but only by calm consideration of views advanced, and the self-asserting person is very nearly always close to error. I know this view is contrary to that of American independence, which leads us on forever to assert ourselves. The true philosophy annuls this and teaches that it is only from the concurrence of investigation that the truth can be arrived at. And the deeper occultism says that the self-asserter debars himself from truth forever. No one mind has all the knowledge possible, and each one is naturally capable of seeing but the one side that is easy for him by reason of his race inheritance and the engrafted tendencies of his education.

Seventh, by remembering that we cannot at once alter the constitutional tendencies of the atoms of our brains, nor in a flash change ourselves. We are insensibly affected by our education, by the ideas of our youth, by the thought, whatever it was, that preceded our entrance upon theosophy. We require to have

patience, not with the system of theosophy, but with ourselves, and be willing to wait for the gradual effect of the new ideas upon us.

The taking up of these ideas is, in effect, a new mental incarnation, and we, just as is the case of a new manvantara, have to evolve from the old estate and with care gradually eradicate the former bias. It is taught in the *Secret Doctrine* that the moon is the parent of the earth and has given to us all that we are now working over in our world. It is the same in the case under consideration. Our former mental state is our mental moon, and has given us certain material which we must work over, for otherwise we attempt to go contrary to a law of nature and will be defeated.

Some may ask if there is not any sort of study that will enable us to shave off these old erroneous modes of thought. To them I can only give the experience of many of my friends in the same direction. They say, and they are supported by the very highest authority, that the one process is to enquire into and attempt to understand the law of spiritual unity and the fact that no one is separate but that all are one in the plane of spirit, and that no single person has a particular spirit of his own, but that *atman*, called the "seventh principle," is, in fact, the synthesis of the whole and is the common property of every being high and low, human, animal, animate, inanimate, or divine. This is the teaching of the *Mundaka Upanishad* of the Hindûs, and the meaning of the title "Mundaka" is "Shaving," because it shaves off the errors which stand in the way of truth, permitting then the brilliant lamp of spiritual knowledge to illuminate our inner nature.

And for those who desire to find the highest ethics and philosophy condensed in one book, I would recommend the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*, studied with the aid of such lectures as those of our Hindû brother—now deceased—Subba Row of Madras.\* They have been reprinted from the *Theosophist* and can be procured by any one. In the *Secret Doctrine* Mme Blavatsky says: "The best metaphysical definition of primeval theogony in the spirit of the Vedantins may be found" in these lectures.

In the conclusion of *The Key to Theosophy* H. P. Blavatsky, speaking of the future of the Theosophical Society, writes:

"Its future will depend almost entirely upon the degree of selflessness, earnestness, devotion, and last but not least, upon the amount of knowledge and wisdom possessed by those members on whom it will fall to carry on the work and to direct the Society after the death of the Founders. If they cannot be free from the

\**Theophilist* for Feb., Mar., and June, 1887.

bias of theological education, the result can only be that the Society will drift off on to some sandbank of thought or another, and there remains a stranded carcass to moulder and die. But if that danger be averted the Society will live on into and through the twentieth century. It will burst assunder the iron fetters of creed and caste. The West will learn to understand and appreciate the East at its full value. The development of psychic powers will proceed healthily and normally, and mankind will be saved from terrible bodily and mental dangers which are inevitable where those powers develop in a hotbed of selfishness and passion as they now threaten to do.

"At the last quarter of every century one or more persons appear in the world as the agents of the Masters, and a greater or less amount of occult knowledge is given out." She concludes by stating that the present T. S. is one of those attempts to help the world, and the duty of every member is made plain that they should preserve this body with its literature and original plans so as to hand it on to our successors who shall have it ready at the last quarter of the next century for the messenger of the Masters who will then, as now, reappear. Failure or success in this duty presents no obscure outcome. If we succeed, then in the twentieth century that messenger will find the materials in books in thought and in popular terms to permit him or her to carry forward the great work to another stage without the fierce opposition and the tremendous obstacles which have frowned upon us during the last fifteen years just closed. If we fail, then the messenger will waste again many precious years in repreparing the ground, and ours will be the responsibility.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.



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Paper No. 9.

# THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: AMERICAN SECTION.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE, P. O. Box 2659.

## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

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### Light and Life.

[*Read before the Cincinnati T. S. Oct. 5, 1890, by Dr. J. D. Buck.*]

MODERN investigation concerns itself with the phenomena of light and life in relation to our senses and modes of consciousness, and yet it generally fails to deduce from the mode of consciousness those basic principles which alone can lead to any real knowledge. No mere perception of phenomena can lead to the real nature of that which manifests. No single phenomena of nature can be perceived by any two individuals in the same degree, by reason of the recognized fact that in no two individuals are the senses equally developed or the range of consciousness the same. Just as phenomena change continually, so do our senses vary as constantly in perceiving and apprehending these changes. It may thus be seen how continually the real cause and the exact nature of phenomena elude us. Notwithstanding this uncertainty as to results, and our ignorance of nature, man everywhere recognizes constant relations and uniform processes in the phenomena around him.

With all the varied forms of living things and the diverse manifestations of life, man still discerns a "physical basis" and a common factor in all living forms. So also with light. The light of the lamp, the electric spark, and the effulgence of the glorious orb of day; the moon's pale beams, the light of life and of love and intelligence, whether direct, reflected, or figurative, all have one common root in the thought and the apprehension of man.

It is useless to proceed by mere speculation from the phenomenal side of nature and expect to discover the cause lying back of all phenomena. By so doing we can at best only convert the illu-

sions of the senses into the delusions of the mind, and so add to ignorance rather than to knowledge. But are we necessarily barred from knowledge and forever chained to ignorance? By no means. It is not by mere assumption nor by guessing that we are to arrive at truth. Neither is science, as such, at fault. We are at fault in our apprehension and application of the scientific method, and in our misapprehension of the nature and uses of philosophy.

All real knowledge for man is a retrospect of experience. We are familiar only with ground over which we have once passed. Philosophy must proceed by strict analogy from this basis of experience, and so forecast the future and direct further experience.

All planes of life from monera to man, from rock to archangel, are limited by environment and measured by experience, and yet related by immutable law.

Nowhere does the lower life comprehend the higher, but everywhere the higher life involves the lower and overshadows it as the promise and potency of things yet to be. The body of the plant is as the astral form of the still more tangible mineral. The body of the animal equally and prophetically overshadows the plant. Man absorbs all lower forms of life and is himself overshadowed by higher forms. Man can be that higher form only as he involves it into his life and being by conscious experience. The immutability of law, the continuity of life, and the principle of analogy justify these deductions, no less than the law of evolution and the principle of progress.

If all real knowledge is based on experience and we can know only that which we have already become, then our knowledge is the coälescence, the joint expression, of the knower and the thing known. Every principle, every process, every phenomenon or law really experienced or cognized by man, has its root in him and its efflorescence in his daily life. In man, therefore, dwell all powers, all potencies, latent and undeveloped or active and powerful; cosmos in micro-cosmos; God and nature meeting and blending in man.

The acquirement of real knowledge for man is, therefore, an evolution of that which is already involved in his nature "from the beginning." No theory or hypothesis, neither faith nor intuition, can really teach man or make him wise. He must evolve and become. What can man know of life more than the rocks and the trees except as it unfolds within him, and as he experiences its sensibilities, exercises its functions, and manifests its powers? Only through larger life in time can he apprehend life in any higher degree.

The perception of light through the agency of that optical instrument, the eye, and the phenomena of light as determined by the senses give us no idea of the nature of light itself. Plato says we see by virtue of the light in us commingling with the light of the sun. The sun shines not by combustion, says Oken; but "*by virtue of its standing in the midst.*"

We thus see that our relations to light and life are the same; *viz.* through experience and participation.

Light and Life are the two poles of one eternal substance, the first differentiation of *Mulaprakrita*, as *Mulaprakrita* is the vehicle of Parabrahm. Light and Life are the manifestations of energy. The energy that thus manifests, being differentiated, is *Akâsa*, the synthesis of all forces in nature. Depolarize *Akâsa* and it becomes *Mulaprakrita*.

The purpose of the present paper is not, however, to discuss the essential nature of light and life except so far as may be necessary to show their relation to and manifestation in man.

Whatever light and life may be in their last analysis we may not know: but man's relation to nature through participation in its substance and modes of expression we may know.

What the sun is to the solar system the center of self-consciousness is to man. From this center in man radiate all his powers and potencies, and to it converges everything from the outer world that can in any way enter his sphere of consciousness or mould his life. It is thus that man dwells continually in a world of his own creation. What things are to man depends on the range and depth of his own experience. What things are *in themselves* depends on Eternal Nature. In the construction of his personal kingdom man is influenced by his own desires. His motive-power is his own will, the architect being his own imagination. Just so far as these things, constituting man's "personal equation," govern his life, just so far is life a delusion and a snare, at best an idle dream. Just so far as man can get rid of the "personal equation" and pass from the individual to the universal, just so far will he convert his dreams into realities and his delusions into knowledge.

He who is content with his delusions is like the insane person who imagines himself some noted individual, an object of pity to others, even while wrapped in his own conceit as in a mantle.

The great majority of persons dwell thus in an unreal world of their own creation. Each individual walls himself in till every thought is a delusion; every image a fantasm; every desire an abomination; and every act a crime against his Higher Self. When the awakening comes and the walls of selfishness and pride tumble so that "not one stone is left upon another," man's house is

brought to desolation and he is no nearer truth and real knowledge than he was at the beginning of life; indeed he is still farther off, for the illusions of self involve far more than the body.

In the Platonic no less than in the Esoteric Philosophy the student in his search for truth avoided the personal equation by proceeding from universals to particulars. Step by step he broke down the barriers of self that hedged him in, and so advanced in knowledge. He was taught not to rely too implicitly on the evidence of the senses, and to beware of his own desires; and in cultivating his reasoning and mathematical faculties undertook to apply universal principles to the problems of daily life. Advancement in wisdom, therefore, did not depend on the knowledge of facts, but was a matter of discipline. Man did not seek to acquire knowledge, but to become the thing he sought to know. He discerned that the life in him was a part of the universal Life of Nature, and everything that separated him from that universal life led away from true wisdom. The constant discipline of his thought and his life thus brought him in tune with nature and gave him a key to her mysteries—nay, he became *himself* that key, as a sounding-board of the diapason of nature.

“Through all the compass of the notes it ran,  
The diapason closing full in man.”

When, therefore, Plato said, “We see by virtue of the *light in us* commingling with the light of the sun,” he stated a truth, not only unapproachable by but incomprehensible to physical science. He not only stated a fact, fortified by all that modern science really knows, but he included in the *form* of statement the key by which the fact may be apprehended and used for further progress. He stated a universal truth entirely free from the personal bias. We might paraphrase the statement and say, “We live by virtue of the life in us commingling with the universal life. We love only by virtue of the love in us commingling with the universal (divine) love.” It is the curse of separateness that continually hampers man, impedes his progress, and dwarfs his soul. It is his desire to wall himself in, and to gather to himself the choicest and best, no matter how many others may suffer and mourn, and so he amasses millions till, like the slowly approaching walls of a dungeon, he crushes out of his own soul the last vestige of light and life.

Modern physiologists are generally inclined to repudiate vital force and to regard all vital processes as originating in those molecular arrangements of matter constituting the tissues and organs of the body. Modern science has no room for the concept that there is an ocean of energy lying back of all material forms, and

that this limitless ocean prevades all matter and gives rise to all phenomena. That substance and energy have here their common root, and that this substratum is indeed an ocean of life, the quivering pulse of the universe, will hardly yet be accepted by modern physical science. The phenomena of light and life are related as the two poles of a current of electricity, the differentiations of this "cosmic dust" giving rise to all phenomena.

Man, however, is something more than an aggregation of atoms manifesting force; something beyond a phenomenon. He is a complex being, made up of many parts; at one with nature, yet transcending all forms and all phenomena. These various parts into which the complex structure of man may be divided exist in concrete degrees. Not only is each of these separate parts related to its fellows in a very definite manner, but each corresponds to a plane in nature, so that in man is an answering chord to every universal tone.

If the life of man springs from the ocean of life, and if the universal life qualifies in him and differentiates in endless variety of potency, form, and feature, there is still in him something more that cannot be deduced from phenomenal existence. This is his self-consciousness. There is the knower, and the consciousness that he knows. Below this point is life with all its varied phenomena; but self consciousness transcends all life and all phenomena. It is true that, so far as we know, an organism only manifests life and manifests consciousness. But just as we discern an ocean of life back of all manifestation, out of which spring and into which return all living forms; so above all manifest consciousness in man there must lie an ocean of consciousness, or else the chain of analogy must break at some point and the immutability of law cease to be immutable.

In man, as a center, converge all lines from lower levels. He thus epitomizes all creation below him, and upon the center of consciousness in man are focused those diviner rays that arise above the plane of phenomena, and these illumine his conscience and inspire his life. Man thus reaches a point in his conscious experience when to live and to be illumined are one. Life and Light become synonymous. His astral form or linga sarira has become a spiritual body, even while inhabiting the physical frame.

In the exercise of his perceptive faculties man generally misapprehends the very nature of those faculties, and hence with regard to the thing perceived he never discerns the "*thing in itself*," but only sees its outward manifestations. These outward manifestations are so variable and illusory, and the senses that perceive

them are also so imperfect, that man is continually blinded and deceived. Man is never an indifferent spectator or a mere casual observer of the phenomena of nature, for he is involved in every phenomenon. Man is himself a part of the light he perceives, and tied to every object which by the aid of light becomes to him visible. His nature is involved in every atom of the universe, and every atom has an answering chord in him. Habitually, however, man regards nature as something outside of and indifferent to himself, and this is because he knows neither himself nor nature.

This is not a fine-spun philosophy, transcendental and without use or value. It is simply a logical deduction from every experience of our lives. How can one sympathize with suffering who has never suffered? Again I say, we know only that which we have experienced, and we have become a part of and forever involved in that which we have experienced. Man's power to experience is without limit, and this could not be the case if the elements, the very substance and force of all nature, were not latent and potential in him.

In order to broaden his experience and increase his knowledge man must mingle with the world. He cannot hold himself aloof from man or from nature without belittling his life and dwarfing his own soul. The folly of separateness and the evil of selfishness are thus apparent. The Brotherhood of Man is not a mere sentiment, or an article of faith alone; it is an epitome of man's true relation to nature, founded on law, and deducible even from physics and physiology.



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Paper No. 10.

# THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: AMERICAN SECTION.

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## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

[Neither the Theosophical Society nor any officer thereof is responsible for the contents of any Paper in this series.

### **A Warrant for the Study of Occultism Found in the New Testament.**

[*Read before the Krishna T. S., Philadelphia, Nov. 1, 1890, by Alex. W. Goodrich.*]

**I**N common with all true science, Theosophy inculcates the idea of the gradual evolution of humanity through vast cycles of time. On one important point, however, we have advanced, as we think, a step farther, and have reason to believe that the growth of humanity has been progressing simultaneously (though not always evenly) upon three different planes. Upon one side, the development of the physical form, upon another the development of the intellectual faculties, and upon the highest plane of all the development of the spiritual powers.

All real knowledge is gained from experience, and is generally confirmed to us by the agreement of two or more of the organs of sense. Opinions and beliefs, however persistent, cannot take the place of knowledge; in fact, can only be a hindrance to growth; and it is from a profound conviction of the importance of perfect intellectual freedom that the wise in all ages have refused to accept as infallible the teaching of any written scripture or of any living being.

However, it is wholly immaterial for my purpose whether the Christian Scriptures are accepted in the light of a special divine revelation, or, from the other extreme, as altogether human,—the fragmentary, mutilated, and distorted records of an obscure sect; sufficient remains to enable one to discover the truth under-

lying them, and those who study them, remembering St. Paul's injunction that "the letter killeth, the spirit giveth life," may, indeed, find there divine inspiration sufficient to guide them through the labyrinth of their earthly existence and a clue to ravel that profoundest, yet simplest, of all the sciences, the study of Occultism.

Now, as I must take you with me to a cursory examination of the spiritual life before we can understand the first principle of Occultism, let me call your attention to the fact that while spirituality leads us, invariably, to strive to overcome our lower animal tendencies, and towards a life of simplicity, purity, and truth, without dissimulation, and *that* purely for the satisfaction of the attainment, without hope of reward here or hereafter; still, spirituality is not always and only associated with an immaculate existence, but may be awakened in the most degraded of mankind, and can only gradually grow through many a misstep and backward fall. And, furthermore, there may be examples of false spirituality which must not be mistaken for the real; lives in which all the baser passions have, indeed, been suppressed, but only to give place to dogmatism and cold formality and a very natural, though false, pride in their superiority. Puffed up in their conceit, such men have struggled heroically, only to bring themselves under the condemnation of Christ in the narrative of the Pharisee and the Publican. Although they may gain, among men, a reputation of saintliness, they have not yet commenced the spiritual growth.

It seems to be plainly indicated throughout the Scriptures that spirituality is another and quite a separate existence, concurrent with and always commencing during our physical existence, not after death, as commonly supposed.

This, I understand, is what Saint Paul means when he says "The spirit giveth life"; and again, "For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace"; "And if Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness"; and again, "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your *mortal* bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you."

Experience, therefore, is the test of knowledge, and this must be equally true on the spiritual as on the intellectual side of our nature. Individuals, like plants, will be hindered in growth by their environment, and as physical development does not include the intellectual, neither do the most brilliant intellectual attainments evolve the spiritual; and as the intellectual and cultured among mankind have opened before them a much more attractive and brighter existence than can be understood or appreciated by the lower animal natures, so, in a far greater degree, when the

latent spiritual spark, existing in every heart, commences to unfold itself, sending a new impulse and thrill through every tissue and fiber of the body so that it can be *felt* and *known*, will the same Universe assume new aspects, infinite and wonderful, altogether transcending all previous conceptions. It is indeed a new life, opening up unending vistas and ever-widening circles of knowledge, wisdom, and power.

In common with all true Christians, the earnest desire of true Theosophists must always be that "the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, ye may know what is the hope of his calling and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints."

In this sphere, you may, if you will, find opportunities for real and practical experience and active work that shall bring you that which you have elsewhere sought in vain—true happiness. Will you test it? The key to the gateway lies at your feet. Be careful lest you spurn it.

It is important to explain that, because of the limitations and altogether too human attributes that have grown up in the minds of men in association with the name "God," we prefer among ourselves some other designation, as the "Supreme Deity," the "Absolute One," or the "Higher Self." Although being infinite, it is impossible to limit or define His nature, I can say briefly that His is a spiritual existence. He is a subtle essence, permeating every atom (organic and inorganic) of the universe. No existence is possible outside of Him, and each individual partakes more or less of His nature. We can only know Him through the high faculty of "conscience" whose gentle voice we all so often fail to heed, and it is for this reason that we look upon Him as our "Higher Self."

It is not in any figurative sense, but because it expresses a relation that really exists, that the first and highest emanation of the Supreme Being is designated "The Sun," who is also a spiritual being or principle, residing in every human heart, which I know not how better to define than as the "Power of Love."

For myself, I can believe that this Divine Principle has been on earth manifested in the flesh, known as Jesus of Nazareth, the "Christ," the "anointed" or the "Good," and can understand what is meant when it is said that through Him alone we can be saved, but you will agree with me that this refers to His living spiritual power, and not to any belief in his personal existence two thousand years ago.

But, as being more convenient and more readily understood by those brought up in the Christian religion, I have throughout this paper made use of the ordinary Christian titles of the Deity. I

trust they may not be misleading;—the natures remain the same—the truths embodied remain unchanged—the names must be for our purpose indifferent.

Now concerning Occultism and what warrant can be found for its study in the New Testament Scriptures. Although it is to be found in all ancient scriptures and has been taught by all the world's greatest minds, by Buddha as well as Christ, by Pythagoras, Plato, Apollonius, and Plotinus, and by many whom I need not stop to name, throughout historic times, right here in the New Testament Scriptures will be found an *embarras de richesse* from which to-night we can perhaps glean a lesson.

It will, I presume, hardly be necessary to refute the popular idea that Occultism deals with such matters as the invocation of spirits, sorcery, or parlor magic. *These* are properly condemned by all religions and all true systems of Philosophy.

Occultism is well and tersely defined in a statement of one of the three objects for which the Theosophical Society exists; namely, to investigate unexplained laws in nature and the psychological powers latent in man.

In the Universe, visible and invisible, all is nature: we have, therefore, no use for the word supernatural. Miracles, in the sense of wonders, are occurring in our every-day experience, and become to us so commonplace that we even fail to notice them. But miracles, in the sense of inversion or an obstructing of the laws of nature, have never occurred and never will occur. The farther one penetrates into the *arcana* of nature, the more certain does it become that the Universe is governed by unvarying and invariable laws, but no one is more ready than those who have devoted their lives to the study of science to admit that we have as yet discovered and formulated very few of those laws and that the undiscovered regions are very vast.

In the book of Job it is written, "Who, then, by searching can find out God; who can understand the Almighty to perfection?" No! Humanity can never exhaust the mystery of God. But there is a way by which we can find out *very much* about God, and perhaps even some of those hidden laws which enabled Christ to perform such wonders as are found in the record of his life.

Is this impious? Listen! "For verily I say unto you, if ye have faith like a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove, and *nothing* shall be impossible unto you," Matt. 17:20; and again, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do because I go unto the Father." John 14:12. I do not mean by

this that you or I can in one step attain to the power of Christ: such divinity is very far beyond us, and lies upon a rugged and thorny path of self-sacrifice, crucifixion, and death, but we may strive to be more and more like unto him until we attain to the perfect man in Christ Jesus. For although evolution has so far attained its highest development in man, it would be illogical and foolish to claim that here it ends, and cannot, *must not* further go. "Beloved, now are we the children of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be."

But it is quite horrible to think of busying ourselves prying into his secrets!: to which he replies, "Knock and it shall be opened unto you, seek and ye shall find." "Howbeit when He, the spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you unto all truth"; "For there is nothing hid that shall not be made manifest, nor anything secret that shall not be known"; to which he adds significantly, "Take heed therefore *how* ye hear, for whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that he hath," as if he desired to impress us with the necessity of personal effort; and, indeed, how else shall we know anything of God—the Absolute One, unless by ascertaining the laws by which nature is governed and, so far as in us lies, coöperating with those laws, for although nature is not God, yet it is the only manifestation of God possible to us, and in nature must be included all things, visible and invisible.

This is precisely the lesson of life and the *reason* of our being, that we learn to know God. He freely offers us the opportunity to fathom his inmost secrets, and only conceals them that we may have some stimulus to effort, which is the universal law of growth. For this purpose alone are we endowed with the high faculty of reason. Shall we hide our talent in a napkin? Shall we allow a rubbish heap of prejudices, or dogmas, or opinions to clog our mental machinery and prevent all progress? "Shall height or depth or any other creature separate us from the knowledge and love of God?"

Though by no means exhaustive, it would seem to me that here, in this New Testament Scripture, we have thus found not only sufficient warrant but an urgent appeal to us to study God in all his works. How then shall we enter upon this study, for unless we can apply these principles to practice, all theorizing is a wicked waste of time; and we are all aware that the most ardent *intellectual* effort fails to penetrate very far,—that the deepest students of Nature's laws must willingly admit that they are everywhere baffled. Still, there *is* a way and an effective one, and it is found in the sole essential principle which binds together the members

of this society, "Human Brotherhood." This is the key-note to the universe; let us see how it applies.

Now the operations of nature are infinitely varied, and the laws which govern those operations must be as infinite. Yet there is one law to which all other laws are subject, one law which governs all the operations of nature, and he who knows it has the key to unlock them all. One law written so plainly on the earth and in the heavens, blazened everywhere, that it is only wonderful how poor, blind humanity stumbles on and on through the centuries and never heeds it, one law so simple that it is expressed with only one word, and that law is *love*.

The law of affinity, we say in chemistry, the law of cohesion, and the law of gravity, what are they but the law of love and harmony; and it is not difficult to trace this law in every department of nature, nor difficult to perceive that growth and development are seriously impeded where harmony is lacking.

Bear in mind that it is by growth that each of us will at some time be born anew into the spiritual life, and that this rebirth has been found by experience to bring with it new perceptions, new faculties, and a tremendous impetus to expansion and further development, and you will then have caught a glimpse of the goal that lies before you. This growth can be fostered *only* by a living realization of the common brotherhood of humanity. When you can live this out in your lives, you will have commenced a development, scarcely perceptible at first, like the gentle unfolding of a bud, but which shall lead you, if you persevere, where you can realize what St. Paul means when he says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for those who love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit, for the spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God," and in the 5th chapter of Galatians he tells us that "the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even as this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." St. Peter writes, "Love one another from the heart fervently," and St. John most emphatically, "If a man say I love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

It seems a very *simple* thing, but God "hath chosen the simple things of this world to confound the wise," and you will recollect that Christ says, "I thank thee, Heavenly Father, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

This spiritual growth, then, must be realized in one's life before

it can be known, for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are *spiritually* discerned." Strive, then, for this spiritual attainment. It is beyond all money and all price, "a well of water springing up into eternal life." Join your forces with ours, that to the impetus to be obtained from the aggregation of many individuals in a united effort we may perhaps find that fulcrum for which Archimedes looked in vain.

And now, if I have time, I should like to say one word about the Theosophical Society. The reasons for its existence are announced in three principles, only the first of which, however, is imposed as a condition upon its associates. They are very brief and are as follows:

1st.—To form a nucleus of a universal brotherhood without distinction of race, creed, or color.

2d.—To promote the study of Aryan and other eastern religions and sciences, and demonstrate the importance of that study.

3d.—To investigate unexplained laws in nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

Among its associates are found practical men of all nations under the sun, distinguished Brahmins, Mohammedans, Parsees, Jews, and Christians. Some of the world's most brilliant men of science whose names it would be boastful to mention, representing all the learned professions and all walks in life, laborers, mechanics, lawyers, and physicians, professors in the universities, clergymen of every denomination, and even Bishops, accept its teachings. This organization may live or die, succeed or fail in its work, but the basis upon which it builds is the foundation-stone of all religions, a principle upon which all can agree, one which is, and ever will be, an eternal truth. From this as a basis each individual member of the Society is required to work out for himself as much of absolute truth as he may. He is at liberty to accept or reject any and all statements laid before him, but if he is in deadly earnest in his life and labor of love and fellowship, a consistent system of truth will unfold itself to him from his own inner conscience which he will gradually be able to test by experience.

And concerning the second object, it must not be forgotten that through its founders the Society possesses exceptional facilities for the study of ancient Sanscrit Scriptures, a revival of learning which is destined to have a powerful effect upon the future development of humanity.

The third object of the Society has already been set forth in this paper. The three are interrelated, though they may be pursued separately.

The Society is no school of Thaumaturgy; we hold out no alluring prospects. The journey of life is always uphill, and here, as elsewhere, one law reigns. Individual effort can alone be depended upon to produce individual growth. Many who join us get disengaged and fail utterly.

The Society has no desire or occasion to make proselytes. As it will welcome any who desire to unite their energies with ours in the furtherance of our purpose, so it affords us pleasure to lay before you a statement of these principles, to the end that all men may see, as St. Paul says, "what is the *fellowship* of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."

*The Secretaries are reminded that Branch Papers are the property of the Branch, to be preserved among its archives, and, when possible, to be bound at the end of each year.*



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# THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: AMERICAN SECTION.

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## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

[Neither the Theosophical Society nor any officer thereof is responsible for the contents of any Paper in this series.]

### The Influence of Theosophy.

[*A Paper read before the Aryan T. S. Dec., 1890, by Mr. J. H. Connelly.*]

**W**HAT good is it? Is Theosophy a beneficial factor in the tiresome problem of mundane existence, or is it only another profitless threshing of the east wind of the unknowable with the weak flail of man's self-delusion? The materialist, raising his weary eyes from the muck-heap in which he rakes to find the primordial atom, sneers indifferently, "What is the good of it?" The Christian, peering with cold suspicion over the wall of bigotry with which he has surrounded himself, aggressively demands, "What's the good of it?" The egoist and the sensualist, instinctively recognizing its antagonism, in resentful petulence protest, "What is the good of it?"

Both by words and deeds we may answer the question, telling and demonstrating what this moral force has wrought in us, and illustrating the influence it will exercise, in proportion to its general acceptance, upon all humanity. And, though this may perhaps be something less easy than dealing in flabby generalities about "universal brotherhood" and platitudes concerning other vast abstractnesses of which we practically know nothing as yet, it will probably be much better for us.

If Theosophy were, like Christianity, a thing to be swallowed whole and unquestioningly, as a bolus, under the pressure of a positive assurance that "he who believeth shall be saved, and he who believeth not shall be damned," it would be simply a creed and without reason for existence. The world has creeds enough already, so many and so various that its gorge rises at them all. But Theos-

ophy is not a creed; it is a knowledge of the immutable laws by virtue of which and in subjection to which all that is exists; a knowledge limitless, without beginning and without end, to the acquisition of which, so far as we may, we address ourselves, knowing that our advancement in it will be duly proportioned not only to our respective capabilities but to the thoroughness with which we severally conform to the harmonious operations of those laws, to the utmost of our comprehension of them. The laws *are*, and it is not our believing or non-believing in them that will save or damn us, but our wilful refusal to know, or knowing to obey them, that will continue their operation upon us as pain, such continuance of ignorance and recalcitrance with their attendant protraction of the sorrows of life being what we deem damnation.

A Brooklyn gentleman, a few days since, in a newspaper communication, demonstrated the orthodoxy of his Christianity by felicitating himself that out of all the inhabitants of the earth, from the time of Adam until that of Christ, *no* souls were saved. Another pious brother, replying to him, ventured to take some mild exceptions to that wholesale apportionment of damnation, opining that God probably showed some favoritism in the special cases of certain persons, whom he named from Biblical history, and he expressed some doubts about the damning of the babies who died very young during that period; but so far as the great mass of adults he conceded that Satan had doubtless scooped them in. Well, there was at least some sweet consolation in that. Even if, say, five per cent got away, it must be a boon to the pious soul to reflect that there were still several millions damned for the sin of having got themselves born too soon.

How lonesome and unsatisfactory must seem, to the orthodox Christian mind, our conception of the Universe. It contains no devil and no hell! The place of punishment we believe in is right here on earth. We are, while suffering mortal life, in just so much of a hell as our deserts have made for us, and deliverance from it is in our own hands, through our conscious and willing conformity to "the good law." It is not enough that we believe in the law as a fact, we must accept it as our guide in life, controlling our thoughts, words and deeds. Let us endeavor now to see the effect of such acceptance, primarily upon the individual theosophist himself.

I am inclined to believe that the first thought grown in the mind clearly from theosophic seed is a realization of the overwhelming vastness of the Universe, of time, and of the forces that ignore or spurn the feeble littleness of that shadow of being—man. The triviality of his interests, the unreality of his cares, the insignifi-

cance of all mundane things that his heart holds dear, floods the mind with weariness and disgust. "What idle, mischievous devil," he asks himself, "found any fun in inventing humanity?" And for the sowing of that seed no more is needed than such knowledge of the universe as material science affords, observation of the conditions of existence surrounding us, and endeavors to reconcile both with the ordinarily accepted theories of the here and the hereafter based upon an anthropomorphic God. "All this chaotic whirl of injustice, meanness, misery, and crime the proud achievement of a just, omnipotent, and good God? Impossible. We accountable for anything! Nonsense. Why, we would be justified in feeling contempt for a God who would even take the trouble of damning such creatures as we are. There is no object in our being. The hereafter is here: there is no morrow other than the ending of our individual participation in the gigantic humbug of it. 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.'"

The first light that breaks in upon this mental gloom is shed by a comprehension of the law of karma, which is the law of harmony pervading the universe, the law of perfect justice that is inherent in all being, that is not made or enforced or remitted, but, like the Absolute, *is*, and is self-operative, inflexible, and sure, pitiless yet kind, terrible but just. All the preceding ferment of the mind has been but preparatory to understanding and acceptance of that law. But when first realized it seems cold and cruel.

Before we waked to a sense of their nothingness, the teachers of creeds had cunningly implanted in our minds, deeper than we were conscious of, delusive hopes of evading, through prayers and offerings, professions of repentance and the vicarious atonement, the consequences of our evil deeds. They invited our attention to the penitent thief on the cross and requested us to observe that he got into paradise—by a very close shave, it is true, but still he "got there," which to an American is the main thing after all—and they assured us that, even at the worst, they could do a great deal to help us along with their influence in our hour of direst need—if we only "had faith."

Of course there were beings, as we learned from the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, "whom God, for his greater glory, had foreordained to eternal damnation;" but the foreordained was always the other fellow—not us, and that reconciled us to the arrangement, even if we couldn't see the utility or justice of it. But this new consciousness coming suddenly upon us that each would be judged upon his individual merits, his thoughts, words, and deeds weighed in a faultless balance, of which no priest's finger might tip the beam, was truly alarming. The mind, however,

that has got so far in the habit of thinking for itself as to have reached that point, must needs go farther. Realizing that it *must* stand alone, it endeavors to do so; self-reliance grows, and confidence in the existence of absolute justice no longer appalls but strengthens. Along with the awful new-born sense of individual responsibility rises an apprehension of the dignity of being and the tremendous potentialities within the mastery of the soul thus conceded worthy to be the arbiter of its own destiny, such as could not be encouraged by belief in the wielding of omnipotent power by an egotistic, ill-tempered, and revengeful God, who has favorites, can be induced by special pleaders to change his mind, only occasionally has the grace to repent of the evil he has done, and fancies that it is for his "greater glory" to damn a percentage of us merely because he can.

Let a man once get a conviction of the truth of karmic action fixed in his mind, and he cannot help trying to do as nearly right as he knows how. His whole life will be moulded by remembrance of the great law and the knowledge that:

"It slayeth and it saveth, nowise moved  
Except unto the working out of doom;  
Its threads are Love and Life; and Death and Pain  
The shuttles of its loom.

"It will not be contemned of any one;  
Who thwarts it loses and who serves it gains;  
The hidden good it pays with peace and bliss,  
The hidden ill with pains.

"It seeth everywhere and marketh all;  
Do right—it recompenseth! Do one wrong—  
The equal retribution must be made,  
Though Dharma tarry long.

"It knows not wrath nor pardon; utter-true  
Its measures mete; its faultless balance weighs:  
Times are as nought, to-morrow it will judge,  
Or after many days.

"Such is the Law which moves to righteousness,  
Which none at last can turn aside or stay;  
The heart of it is Love, the end of it  
Is Peace and Consummation sweet. Obey!"

The narrow limits of even the longest mortal life would be manifestly inadequate to the working out of karmic justice for the good and evil of that single period of incarnate existence; furthermore, we have such assurance as we believe, that its rewards and punishments are largely bestowed through the conditions of life into which we are ushered by birth. Hence the dogma of reincarnation is indissolubly connected with that of karma. It is by no means a mere poetic fancy that:

“Who toiled a slave may come anew a prince,  
 For gentle worthiness and merit won;  
 Who ruled a king may wander earth in rags  
 For things done and undone.”

And, while it is not thinkable that all bad deeds are paid exactly in kind, since that would involve an endless chain of the greatest wrongs, we may rest assured that all the effects that we produce in this world of effects will in their turn become reproductive causes, the reaction of which we shall feel with due force on this same plane.

Acceptance of those two dogmas smooths the path of the theosophist through life. Inspired with confidence that he, and everybody else, will get exactly what is deserved in this term of material being, and that his happiness or misery, in the next he will be called upon to endure, will depend largely upon the use he makes of this, the cares and anxieties of mundane existence are minimized and cease to afflict him. He is not tempted to sit down in supine self-abandonment, to be the sport of seeming chance, for he is taught that action is duty and he labors to *deserve* reward. But if he fails to attain the material ends for which he exerts himself, he indulges in no complaints against fortune and lamentations over his hard fate. Indeed, he is apt to fall into a habit of looking upon his life experiences as a sort of running account, and of finding compensation and even happiness under misfortune in the reflection, “At all events, there is so much bad karma balanced.” He no longer envies the superior fortunes of others, even the aggressive and insolent luck that often seems to attend those apparently most unworthy of the smiles of Fortune. “Doubtless,” he reasons to himself, “it would not be enjoyed had it not been deserved, either in this or in some preceding incarnation.” He comprehends too that a weighty karmic responsibility attends upon the use made of the apparent free gifts of Fortune. Withal, it must be confessed, he has learned to put but a low valuation upon material things, which are in themselves as impermanent as their possession is unstable and, at best, brief.

Among his first lessons after essaying to enter upon the Path, was that he could do nothing, absolutely nothing, that was not at least liable to have an effect, direct or reflex, upon others. After a time he grew to appreciate that not only his deeds, but his words, and even his thoughts, were subject to the same law. What grovelling considerations of material interest, then, will be able to distract him from the ever-present consciousness of an imperative necessity for self-governance proportioned to his heightened sense of individual responsibility?

I am assured by better theosophists than myself that it is possible for Theosophy to drive out of the heart that burning, corroding destroyer of one's peace, the unslaked thirst to be avenged for grievous and undeserved wrongs. I see no reason to doubt the truth of their averment, but I believe that effacement of self is hardest of all for attainment, particularly for one whose Scotch blood has been inflamed by Christian training. That blood is prone to get hot and rise red in the eyes at thought of an enemy, and the being taught that vengeance is a godlike virtue has not made it any colder.

It is related that a nice little Sunday-school boy, who had a very good, pious mother, went to her one day in tearful but blazing wrath, complaining of grievous treatment by a comrade, and vowed that he would "make it hot" for the offender.

"Oh, my dear son!" remonstrated the gentle lady, "it is very wrong of you to say so. Christ never 'made it hot' for his enemies."

"No; He didn't," asserted the little fellow reluctantly, but after a moment's reflection added in a triumphant tone, "but He's a goin' to."

It would not be reasonable to expect of a God who "visits the sins of the fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth generation," and damns people, not because of anything they have done, but simply "for his greater glory," that he should reprehend very severely a devout worshipper who merely washes his hands in the gore of *his* personal enemies.

Impressions made in youth are exceedingly hard to eradicate, and the sediment left in the mind by early Calvinistic training is peculiarly adhesive, as I know by my own experience. Though I try to view in a theosophic spirit those who have, for basely selfish ends, wilfully and malignantly injured me, I catch myself taking comfort from a whisper out of my Calvinistic memories that hell exists and of course yawns for those particular persons. Being quite satisfied that somebody ought to go to hell, and probably will, is no doubt the next most enjoyable thing to sending him there, and is as far as the prejudices of society will now permit even the most earnest Calvinist to go in emulation of the example of his thorough-going Genevese master, who burned Miguel Servetus for the love of God. But if I were a better theosophist I would not feel that way toward my enemies, even inadvertently, and some day, either in this incarnation or another, I shall get quite out of it—I hope. It is certainly not theosophic, and it is not truly Christian if by that name we mean in conformity to the teachings and example of the gentle and loving adept who enjoined

his disciples, "Forgive your enemies." I wish to be distinctly understood, in what I have said concerning the evil effect of Christian training, as speaking of the perversions of Christ's teachings, formulated into the creed bearing the false brand of his name.

In its further effects upon the individual, Theosophy stimulates and incites to the acquisition of learning, the minds of those who accept it as a motive force in their lives; impels them to expand their knowledge of the relations between the microcosm and the macrocosm, between Man and the Absolute. It teaches that nothing which can be known is too high for the aspiring soul to seek to know; that nothing is to be believed of which reason will not approve; that blind faith is as deadly to the soul as utter unbelief. The theosophist comprehends that it is an imperative requirement upon him, never to be relaxed while he remains bound upon the wheel of life, that he shall master all it is possible for him to learn, upon each of the planes of existence. The laws governing differentiated matter in its myriad manifestations—to the materialist the be-all and the end-all of science—are to him the stepping-stone only, from which he rises to comprehension of the greater wonders of the occult universe. His steps may yet be slow and tottering, his eyes still too weak to look upon the ineffable glory toward which he has set his face, but he is upon the path which will lead him to the Absolute. And nowhere upon that path will he encounter a signboard bearing the church's maxim, "Ignorance is the mother of Devotion."

The theosophist, trained to look beneath the surface of things and by preference to recognize good and truth wherever he may find it, is lenient in his judgment of the errors of his fellow-men, especially in matters of belief. He may justly denounce false teachers and expose the inventions by which the highest and holiest truths have been perverted and debased for the evil purposes of sect and creed, but he is full of sympathy and honest desire to be helpful to the dupes who have been lured astray by the wrecker-lights of the sacerdotal enemies of man. He can find nowhere a faith living in the hearts of men, however brutish they may be and whatever strange features their belief may have assumed, in which there is not some spark of the original true light, some tie that binds it to the good of all the rest. So he seeks to fan that spark into a flame, the clear radiance of which will show the safe way off the shoals and rocks of credulity and superstition. Naturally, since he does not hesitate to affirm that the clergy are impotent to save, and will not have the satisfaction of damning, anybody, they make common cause against him,

laying aside their mutual squabbles—the outgrowth of business rivalry—to denounce him *en chorus*, as a pestilent fellow. But they do so with fear in their hearts, for—excepting perhaps the most ignorant of them, who may be sincere in their devotion to error—they know that he only speaks the truth that is down deep under each of their several creeds, where they had vainly hoped it was hidden forever, and that ere long it will reach the hearts of men and the trade of priesthood will cease. History repeats itself. The theosophist of to-day preaches, as Paul did, the living truth, and those who make great profit by the false worship tremble in angry dread of the result. By the way, if Paul could come around now, how sublime would be his disgust with the way his teachings and those of his Master are habitually misinterpreted and misapplied by the sect that professes most to revere their memories! Both Christ and Paul taught Theosophy, as Buddha did, and as we know it to-day. Christ's professed followers declare that nothing is more pernicious.

Last but not least among its effects upon the individual, I may note that Theosophy fits one to die. It robs the grave of its terrors, not by encouraging a blind faith in something against which reason rebels,—the illogical assumption that by another's death we shall escape punishment for our transgressions, but through a correct understanding of this life as but one of the states of being from which we temporarily pass and to which we return. We do not believe in hell. Not even that charming conception of a good Catholic priest, "a hell paved with the red-hot skulls of unbaptized infants howling through all eternity," has sufficient fascination for us to command our credence. We expect, after a devachanic interlude of illusory happiness, to be sent back here again, as a boy returns to school when the summer vacation is over. Our personalities will be new, but our individualities, our real selves, will be the same, and we will practically take up the burden of life where we laid it down, our good and evil account calculated up to date and a fresh page opened for new entries. We know that the worst that is going to befall us awaits us upon our return to earth life, that it will be just what we have deserved, and that if we do better than we have this time, and still better the next, and so on, the time will arrive eventually when we will not have to come back and suffer any more. And the good endeavors we make in each life will help us to more good in the next succeeding. Beautifully Edwin Arnold lays before us that progress and its goal, in this passage from *The Light of Asia*.

"Thus life's thirst quenches itself  
With draughts which double thirst, but who is wise

.. Tears from his soul this trishna, feeds his sense  
 No longer on false shows, files his firm mind  
 To seek not, strive not, wrong not; bearing meek  
 All ills which flow from foregone wrongfulness,  
 And so constraining passions that they die  
 Famished; till all the sum of ended life—  
 The karma—all that total of a soul  
 Which is the things it did, the thoughts it had,  
 The "self" it wove—with woof of viewless time  
 Crossed on the warp invisible of acts—  
 The outcome of him on the Universe,  
 Grows pure and sinless; either never more  
 Needing to find a body and a place,  
 Or so informing what fresh frame it takes  
 In new existence, that the new toils prove  
 Lighter and lighter, not to be at all,  
 Thus "finishing the Path;" free from earth's cheats;  
 Released from all the skandhas of the flesh;  
 Broken from ties—from Upadanas—saved  
 From whirling on the wheel; aroused and sane  
 As a man wakened from hateful dreams.  
 Until—greater than kings, than gods more glad!—  
 The aching craze to live ends, and life glides—  
 Lifeless—to nameless quiet, nameless joy,  
 Blessed Nirvana—sinless, stirless rest—  
 That change which never changes."

I have touched only upon the broader effects, directed attention—so to speak—to the theosophist's high lights, leaving details to inferential understanding, yet feel that I have already occupied too much time. It must be patent to everyone that a character formed with such general developments as I have lightly sketched must be gentler, truer, wiser, more considerate for his fellow-man and stronger in his mastery of self than, with rare exceptions, men are likely to be without theosophic training. I have heard the objection raised, by a sentimental Christian, that Theosophy was "such a cold, unsympathetic belief, one that aimed at the repression of all natural emotions and desires," and that it "taught those believing it indifference to everything, gave them nothing to lean upon, and demanded of them acceptance of such awful isolation, each from his fellow-man, for time and eternity." The charges are untrue. Theosophy is not unsympathetic, for its service is to awaken humanity to "Sorrow's Cause" and teach how to bring about "Sorrow's Ceasing." Only such emotions and desires does it aim to repress as are the manifested workings of the unworthy lower self. No generous impulse is stayed, no noble aspiration checked, no worthy purpose reprehended by it. If "indifference to everything" consists in rating mundane triumphs and defeats, pleasures and cares, joys and sorrows, at their real instead

of their commonly accepted importance and value, perhaps that may fairly be charged against the perfected theosophist.

The world is under a cloud and life is woe, temporarily, to the little girl because all the sawdust has run out of her doll. The thing she cherished is, from her point of view, dead, and she grieves bitterly for it. "Childish folly, caused by ignorance," wiser adults say of her grief. But after a time they in turn find excuse for correspondingly exaggerated feeling over some event of life that reaches their plane. "Adult folly, caused by ignorance," —comments the placid theosophist. The sawdust is always running out of our dolls and producing mourning. It would be very sad if the dolls really died,—but not otherwise.

And it is true that Theosophy offers man nothing to lean upon. It does not encourage him to lean. It tells him to stand upright, to remember that his immortal part is a portion of the Absolute, that his Higher Self is a God, and enjoins him to live worthy of his origin and his destiny. If it imposes upon him a sense of the greatness of his individual responsibility, it at the same time enables him to feel that in the perfection of infinite justice pervading and ruling the Universe such a requirement upon him is in itself evidence of his potential capacity to meet it.

As for the "isolation" of individuality Theosophy is erroneously supposed to inculcate, theosophists know—and others may readily learn—differently. So far is the contrary the truth that many ardent theosophists are prone to go to the extreme in their apprehension of "Universal Brotherhood" and carry that sublime conception beyond where it properly belongs, as signifying brotherhood of individualities, to a point where it seems to me a gelatinous invertebral notion of an Universal Brotherhood among personalities. I do not want to be suspected of heterodoxy—or whatever approximates most nearly to heterodoxy in our very liberal allowance of latitude in opinion—but, though I have always been accustomed to accord a great deal to the idea of the brotherhood of humanity, my understanding of it is not by any means so comprehensive as that entertained by some of my theosophic brethren.

I come of a family of practical abolitionists, and among my earliest recollections is a picture of a kneeling slave raising his manacled hands toward heaven and pleading, "Am I not a man and a brother?" I was taught to respond and feel that he was, and to do what lay in my power to help him to his birthright. But if the same claim had been made on behalf of the piratical-looking overseer—who with a pair of bloodhounds in leash, a whip in his hand, and a brace of pistols at his belt, loomed up in the background of

the picture, I would very certainly have repudiated it. He a brother of mine! No. I felt that the line had to be drawn somewhere, and I drew it at him. Though the whirligig of time has spun him and his particular class under the sod, his vividly remembered personality serves, to me, as a type for many human beings whom I firmly decline to accept as brothers. And this does not seem to me untheosophical. The Oneness of individualities with each other and with the Absolute, I do not question, but Oneness among personalities is a very different thing. Tanha, karma, and the skandhas are the creators of the personality, and evolution through experience is the object of its existence. It is a transitory thing, guided mainly by the mean but powerful force of Ahamkara—of which, after a mere movement in the measureless procession of the ages, absolutely nothing will remain but the little of the higher principles assimilated by the imperishable individuality—the Higher Self—and the unfading record of good and evil it has left behind. Universal Brotherhood is an attribute of the spirit, which lives; not of the matter, that dies.

So believing, are we any less regardful of the welfare of co-existent personalities? less mindful of our own duties? less kind to suffering? less helpful to the needy? Not at all. But we are less prone to mawkish sentimentality toward the guilty. We are not so prone to say: "It is quite true the man is an infamous scoundrel, but we must pet him because he is our brother." A proper understanding of the real significance of the phrase "Universal Brotherhood" will enlarge our comprehension of the grandest conception possible to the human mind, that of perfect justice, as it will teach us to look with clearer sight beyond the unhappy conditions karmically affecting persons, and even classes and nations, with prescient confidence in the inevitable resultant of the highest good to the race as a whole. Nothing is more true than that "we see dimly in the present what is small and what is great," but it is unwise to encourage ourselves to imagine the existence of ties to those things which, as our philosophy most forcibly impresses upon us, are of the present and the indubitably small.

In good time, the general spread of theosophic knowledge will no doubt elevate mankind generally to our way of thinking; men will learn to hear "the voice of the silence" and be guided by it; the harder lessons of experience will have been mastered by them, and those qualities which I have spoken of as developed in the individual true theosophist of to-day, will become common characteristics of humanity. In that day we will be able to review the pages of our history and see the good in what now appear to us only unmixed evils. The McKinley Tariff Bill, for instance,

that—to the right-thinking mind unprejudiced by selfish greed—is the atrociously wicked child of conscienceless Political Corruption and soulless Commercial Avarice, may then appear in the light of a national benefit—through the stupendous service it will have rendered as a chastening affliction. Let us hope that endurance of it will atone for much national bad karma; surely if we had not been very wicked we would not have deserved it.

Theosophy is not a philosophic abstraction: it is a force that makes men purer, stronger, better, happier; and its universal acceptance will be the emancipation of the race. To all mankind we would say:

“Enter the Path! There is no grief like Hate!  
No pains like passions, no deceit like sense!  
Enter the Path! Far hath he gone whose foot  
Treads down one fond offense.

“Enter the Path! There spring the healing streams  
Quenching all thirst! There bloom th’ immortal flowers  
Carpeting all the way with joy! There throng  
Swiftest and sweetest hours.”

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**Analysis of Man as Suggested by Theosophy.**

[*Read by Miss L. A. Off before Los Angeles T. S.*]

**E**VERY mind capable of serious reflection must at some time think with Shelly such thoughts as these:

“Reason cannot know  
What sense can neither feel nor thought conceive;  
There is delusion in the world and woe,  
And fear and pain. We know not whence we live,  
Or why, or how: or what mute power may give  
Their being to each plant and star and beast,  
Or even these thoughts.—Come near me! I do weave  
A chain I cannot break—I am possessed  
With thoughts too swift and strong for one lone human breast.”

The one question of universal interest “What am I—whence and whither?” appalls the individual consciousness to-day as in the ages we have transcended. Man himself is the seal placed upon the lips of the universal sphinx. The limitations that make the individual man form also the heavy curtain that falls between his desire to know and his knowledge. Countless volumes fill our libraries upon the nature of the soul, but yet the soul remains unsatisfied and reveals ever new and subtler aspects to the analytic mind. Philosophers of all ages have poured their lives out upon it, only to vitalize and perpetuate the mystery of the wistful query, “What is life?” Each age has ripened new and successively higher points of view, none has reached the summit; and it yet remains the paramount aspiration of the soul to comprehend itself. Man’s self-consciousness has been very gradually and almost

imperceptibly vivified, and it has required æons of time to empower his ego to give utterance to the most fundamental of all statements and one that seems almost a challenge to Deity, the "*I am I.*"

Dr. Charcot, Ribot, Binet, Bjornstrom, and others are profitably engaged in promising to widen our scope of this personal *I*, however, and in scientifically demonstrating that it is an unknown quantity capable of infinite expansion and with a variability that passes all our calculation. We are only on the very borderland of *being*. The powers latent within us are the sources that fascinate us and make us in love with life. To possess a uniform ideal—to have developed most exquisite and exhaustive sensibilities—to see the underlying *motif* and tendencies of all expression—to feel effects within the bosom of causes—to embrace everybody's point of view and evolve a relation with the absolute all-permeating *idea*—these are some of the functions that characterize soul development. On these lines the race is doomed to struggle in the long alchemical process which transmutes the elements into ether.

Nature has two poles, spirit and matter, action and inertia. Between these poles hovers man, attracted to either in which his main affinities lie. Matter, some writer has defined as a maximum of substance with a minimum of vibration, and spirit as a maximum of vibration having a minimum of substance. The contempt for substance, its qualities and functions, is fully as unhealthy and degenerating in its effects as its abnormal exaltation. The realm of substance is as indispensable to the migrating consciousness of man as the ideal goal which he has in view—it is, in fact, *compressed spirit*. Emotion unbalanced by scientific knowledge creates the fanaticism which has characterized all religious reforms. The head must balance the heart. Absolute knowledge and absolute power can only follow experiences so manifold as to embody all phases of human consciousness. This method is purely scientific, as the gradual accumulation of experience tends to heighten psychic vibration—expanding its relationships and introducing a richer field of sympathy and action.

When by some masterstroke of art or science we stand at the open portal of the unknown, self-consciousness gives way to a higher and broader sense of being which senses and participates in all life. Oblivious to personality we revel in that spiritual madness which prompted Jean Paul Richter to write: "Away—away—thou reminst me of what in all my endless days I shall not see!"

In invoking the spirit of things we contract the dimensionless,

pure vibration in which we lie latent as the highest ethers within a drop of dew. The density of man's vehicle cannot sustain such vibration for long periods. The passion that lies too deep for tears or joy, and the sense of absolute being which in its rapid transit over the isolated soul the swiftest thought cannot follow:—this is the common possession of all who have attained the dignity of a higher self-consciousness. It is the soul which cognizes truth and its relation to the attributes and functions that constitute the real personality of man. Its supreme faculty is intuition, and it introduces truth into the mind of man without the laborious process of inductive reasoning. It is this principle which discriminates between the lower and Higher Self of man. In order to comprehend its place more fully we may resort to the septenary constitution of man as defined by Theosophy. Most psychological and moral teachers have confined themselves to the dual or triune constitution of man, ignoring the finer intermediate values which Humanity is now prepared to use in outlining itself against the background of the Cosmos. Yet, while reviewing the sevenfold expression, we must hold in view of the fact of man's unity the interdependence of the various principles and their immutability at the core. The first of these components, beginning with the highest, or rather the most ethereal, since there is no "high" or "low," is the Spirit, the all-pervading inmost essence, dimensionless and therefore incomprehensible to the mind of man. This is called *Atman*, meaning *Breath*, a term used by the ancient Sanscrit people to express the Unmanifested One. Its center has been said to exist everywhere and its circumference nowhere. The second constituent is *Buddhi*, meaning enlightenment. This is the spiritual soul, the vehicle by which *Atman* is held and reflected to the Ego. It is the seat of the pure soul—psyche—which is not only loved but worshipped, and, which tends eternally towards the establishment of harmony and peace. Those beings are a rare blessing to humanity whose consciousness is wholly polarized here; they shed bliss and power with their presence upon all who desire to understand and consort with them. The transcendental purity of this part of man's being we can only speculate upon, as we are at this stage of development subject to such slow vibrations as to exclude unadulterated perception of its subtlety.

The third component is *Manas*, or the mind; human understanding and judgment. In this is vested the power of reasoning and of choosing between the higher consciousness and personal desire. It has two attractive poles, and may vitalize either the upper triad which tends to the expression of unity, or the lower quaternary which tends to the expression of separateness. In the Higher

Manas are vested all the finer subjective faculties: aspiration, love of the beautiful and the true, a demand for a wider sphere than psychic sensation; while the lower Manas tends to sympathize with purely personal and egoistic sentiments and emotions. Within this Manas is vested the individual ego with its power to declare "I am I" in distinction from "I am all." Linked closely to it is kama-rūpa or the form of passions and desires—subjective sensations tending to crystallize personality—the conservative energy that narrows sympathy and intelligence and prohibits disinterested action. Kama-rūpa is the lower pole of self-consciousness with all its animal propensities and appetites, and its chief occupation is the creation of personal pleasure or pain—indulgence and its sequel, apathy. Only when touched by the Higher Manas does it begin to refuse to satisfy and to leave the Ego in a suspense that ends in a search for the soul.

In the Higher and lower Manas is enacted the eternal combat of life, dramatized from time immemorial to this day by the inspired poets as the subjective battlefield where the desires are at war with the will of the soul. Here the ideal good and the ideal evil are ranged against each other, and every little mortal monad plays a part which hastens or retards the victorious finale of the Whole. And here Theosophy points out individual responsibility in transmuting its share of universal substance into universal action. Richard Wagner, whose lofty harmonies are destined to resound through ages to come, wrote in a truly theosophic spirit, "No individual can be happy until we all are happy, for no individual can be free until all men are free" and "no ideal is free until it has been carried out to completion and has passed over into life."

The fifth principle is the astral body or ethereal fluidic counterpart of the physical, pervading every atom of its denser expression. Upon its plan the outer physical man is built. The astral body shaped by the character of kama-manas—the desires of the soul—it in turn reflects its shape through the body, moulding and modifying it at every instant of our lives. Men and women are thus literally the embodiment of their interior selves and responsible for every line and curve of the external form, being built according to their innate thoughts. All minds respond to the attractive force of harmonious curves and well-balanced physiognomies. The eye instinctively seeks and dwells upon them and invigorates the soul thereby with new endeavors to lift itself to greater perfection. The astral body is the field of fascination. Unconsciously man, and especially woman, manipulates the astral fluid in every well-focussed effort or action.

The sixth principle or vehicle of the astral body is vitality, a gross element constituting animal magnetism and employed in all physical influences exercised by one mortal over another. It is most closely allied to the seventh or outmost shell encasing man, which our philosophy does not dignify by the term principle,—the extreme negative pole of personality, or physical body. Inert and obtuse as this *form of man* must be, it is not to be despised, since it is but the condensation of future ethers awaiting the involution of living consciousness.

The septenary division of man, however crude, enables the mind to grasp and define qualities and potencies of the complete unit and the present responsibilities of the soul, and as such is an aid in the pursuit of truth.

The object of Theosophy is to determine the middletone of individual nature, where the real and ideal meet and where abstract theory becomes active love.

Self analysis proves that nature is but the tool of the higher consciousness of man, and his will the sculptor of a whole world's destiny. As man learns to be faithful to his responsibilities, he enters the royal dominion of a clear conscience and realizes his highest heaven.

### **What Is the Individual Man?**

[Written for *Satwa T. S.* by James M. Pryse, Dec. 1889.]

**W**ITHOUT sufficient time being taken for meditation and the classification and arranging of new ideas, anyone is liable to become confused by study. It is not necessary to create a system out of new facts acquired or to crystallize them into a creed, for that operates to bar out new ideas, producing narrow-mindedness and bigotry. But it is essential to keep constantly in mind *broad outlines* of all we know, into which our newly acquired facts and ideas may fall in orderly arrangement, just as type is kept in cases, or letters on files,—all the A's together, all the B's together, etc. Otherwise our ideas are certain to become confused. But the outline must be very broad, so as to take in every new thought or fact, and be capable of extension indefinitely—exactly the reverse of a creed, in fact, for the latter is only a settled statement of belief and excludes anything new. It is one thing to close and bar the mental doors in the face of a new idea, and another thing to prepare comfortable quarters in which to entertain new ideas when they come.

Let us see how such an outline can be used in studying Theosophy, say in connection with the seven human principles. *Manifested nature is dual*: in everything we find two-ness. In existence we find our ultimate conception of this two-ness is *matter* and *spirit*. Man, being a miniature universe, touches both poles of being, the material and the spiritual: hence his lowest principle is the physical body, his highest the Atma. Spirit is infinite, matter is infinite also; they are the two poles (or *ends*) of manifested nature, and when the two ends meet, they are *one* and nature is no longer manifested but in pralaya. Mark well that fact: *each is infinite, and so neither can belong to the individual man*. It is said that the Atma or Higher Self of each man is the Atma of every other man. If that holds true of the *spiritual* pole of being, it must also be true of the *material* pole—a man's body does not belong to him individually. A moment's consideration of this even in the light of ordinary science shows that it is so. The particles of matter in one's body are constantly changing, and in seven years or so are completely replaced by others. Those particles are the common property of nature and pass from form to form, belonging to no one in particular. Some force in each body holds the particles in a particular form or shape, but the particles flow on, even when the form remains the same, just as a waterfall retains the same appearance, though the water flows through it and never returns. We can readily see that each particle is going the round of life and will eventually pass through every form in the universe. So it must be with spirit. It belongs to no individual, and must ultimately, in the great cycle of life, pass through every experience. The particles composing a man's body—his lowest principle—have been through all *lower* forms, the mineral, vegetable, and animal. If it were not so, he could not understand those forms. He can understand animals because his own *lower* principles have been through those animal forms. His higher principles are “*gods*” for the same reason, knowing all things divine.

But if neither his spirit nor his body is really *his*, what constitutes the *individual*? Clearly is it not the meeting on midway point where these two meet? It is the pivotal point on which all revolves, the Manas or “*mind*,” which is the true ego, the “*I*;” the three principles below this being of the material universe, the three above of the spiritual world. Then it follows that at death this middle principle divides, and in “*purgatory*” (the place of “*purging*”) or, as theosophists usually call it, kama-loka, the spiritual element of it separates from the material until the next incarnation.

Thus we see in dual nature the material reaching upward and

the spiritual downward, like the cloud and water forming a waterspout—two cones meeting and blending. Represented on a plane surface, it would be two triangles. Blended, they become the six-pointed star with the pivotal center. Since the base of each one, matter and spirit, is practically infinite, it need not be represented, and so we would have a figure like the “square and compass” of Masonry; and the center might be an eye, as the soul (Manas) is called in Hindû Scriptures the “Seer:”

Now, notice that the *point* where the two cones meet is a *mathematical point* without dimensions: whatever passes through from the spiritual to the material world passes through a point or *neutral center*—a “*laya center*,” as occultists say. Take an analogy in common science. (Always look for analogies—that is the key to unlock the secrets of nature.) In a pin-hole camera, which is simply a dark room into which light is admitted through a small hole, all the rays of light have to pass through that single pin-hole, and rays of light pass only in straight lines. The result is that every object reflected in a camera is inverted thus:

The rays of light from the head of the arrow cross those from the bottom, and the image is upside-down. It follows inevitably that every thing in this world is in inverse order to the world above. Objects seen clairvoyantly are reversed, unless the psychic instinctively rights them.

Man unites in himself the spiritual and the material—the God and the brute. In the descending scale, or arc of evolution, *each being grows by devouring other beings*. In the ascending arc this is exactly reversed, and *each being grows by feeding other beings*. That is, he adds to his material nature by *taking*; he adds to his spiritual nature by *giving*. That of course would be impossible if man was isolated; but remember the man proper is but the point whereon are focused the infinite in spirit and the infinite in matter. In giving to others, in the spiritual sense, he draws upon the Higher Self and approaches nearer to It—and It is infinite. So he *grows by giving to others*. So it is that the basis of true magic is brotherhood, altruism, unselfishness. The wolf and the tiger commit no



sin: they are on the descending arc and follow its laws. But man has passed the turning-point of the cycle, and all animal passions should die out within him; instead of the ferocity of animal life, he should show mercy and unselfishness, following the "Path of Compassion" pointed out by the Buddha. If a man does not, it is literally true of him that he "has been born too soon in human shape."

Nature seems ever to say to us, in Shakespeare's words:

"Give me that man  
Who is not passion's slave, and I will wear him  
In my heart's core,—aye, in my heart of hearts."

It is but one law, but it is inverted, so to say, passing from world to world,—and he who would ascend to the spiritual world must recognize it, and know that "near to renunciation lieth eternal peace."

On a broad outline like this, one can arrange and easily remember about the seven principles, their correspondences in nature, and gain clearer conceptions of duty and avoid two evils that threaten every student, (a) becoming confused and diffused—scatter-brained and puzzle-headed—with a host of undigested facts; and (b) settling upon a "creed" that stops all further progress. And having gained a little knowledge of the real meaning of life—of "the Buddha, the Law, and the Assembly,"—the Buddha who is our Higher Self speaking to us upon earth and who may be nearer us than we know; the Law which is that of Harmony; the Assembly which is that of the Gods, who are our own Spirits; the Augoeides or "shining self" of each of us;—having learned a little of this, let each one do what he may for others, "give light and comfort to the toiling pilgrim, and seek out him who knows still less than thou; who in his wretched desolation sits starving for the bread of wisdom and the bread that feeds the shadow [the physical body], without a teacher, hope or consolation, and—let him hear the law."

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# THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: AMERICAN SECTION.

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## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

[Neither the Theosophical Society nor any officer thereof is responsible for the contents of any Paper in this series.]

### Theosophy In Its Practical Application to Daily Life.

[*A Paper read before the Aryan T. S., of New York, by Mr. Alexander Fullerton.*]

WHEN we speak of "Theosophy in its *practical* application to daily life," we contrast its utilitarian with its purely speculative or doctrinal character; and when we speak of "Theosophy in its practical application," we are contrasting it with other species of religion or ethics. Now every philanthropist has a right to ask what there is in Theosophy actually operative towards usefulness, and every religionist has the right to ask wherein it differs thereto from the systems prevalent and understood. It must have a function, or it is valueless; and the function must have some special merit, or it is needless. Thus Theosophists at the very outset of their work are confronted with questions which are inevitable, just, and intelligent.

They cannot be answered by generalities. It will not do to say that Theosophy aims to make men wiser and happier, for the philanthropist will reply that this has always been the aim of every lover of his fellow-men; and one cannot urge merely that it develops godliness in the soul, for the religionist will retort that the same is the purport of every other faith or cult. If neither answer is more distinct, Theosophy is paralyzed at the start.

Nor is the ground covered by asserting a special difference in doctrines, even in those of Reincarnation and Karma, for they, measureless as is their importance, have not been absolutely unknown to other religions; and doctrines are anyhow less influential on men's lives than might at first appear probable. Very re-

spectable, and even sane, citizens have been known to believe in eternal torments, in predestination to them, in the damnation of unbaptized infants, and in other theological horrors which might naturally blast the life of any being more humane than a Calvinistic God; and yet to eat their comfortable dinners, enjoy their careers in a world thus destined, and keep the lurid features of creation in abeyance. It is a mitigation of general illogicalness that it abates the influence of ferocious creeds, and allows of a sweet inconsistency rather than a symmetrical demonism.

A fact is more fundamental than a dogma. To reach it we must pierce through all super-covering of belief, however correct, and then exhume it for study and analysis. Can we stop short in Theosophy, think you, of this?—that the Theosophist sees as no one else sees, and feels as no one else feels, that all life lower than the Highest is transient and imperfect.

This may seem a little vague, possibly a little empty. But examine it carefully and you will see how very full of meaning it is, how pregnant with motive, inspiration, and endeavor, how differentiated from the faiths which are inoperative or inadequate. These few words give really the genius of Theosophy.

If you conceive at one end of a line of thought the eternal, limitless Supreme Spirit, and at the other an ordinary man, the separation may not be infinite, but it is enormous. To the former there are no bounds of wisdom, power, intelligence, or duration; there is no change, for change implies imperfection or progress, and It is perfect. The latter is limited in every way; in faculties, functions, ideas; limited by prejudice, weakness, and passion; limited most of all by a bodily encasement which not only localizes movement, but which by its ailments and accidents and decay hinders the action of higher principles when it does not actually paralyze them. Now what is to be the relation of these far-separated Beings? Is it to continue ever as at present; is it to be lessened up to a certain point and then remain permanently fixed; or is it to diminish steadily through countless ages till the two are at least merged forever? Probably no religion holds to the first of these three possibilities. But, except Theosophy, all religions hold to the second. Some, like Mahometanism, allow a certain diminution to physical ills and a certain enlargement to spiritual perceptions, but never separate blessedness from physical enjoyments, and expect perpetual harems, government, and power. Modern Christianity predicts a transformation of character and an increasing insight into all that is Divine and pure, but it contemplates no amalgamation with the Divine, and, indeed, prevents it by its doctrine of the Resurrection, which, by its permanent union of a

body to the spirit, petrifies the type of glorified humanity and stays progress beyond certain limits. A saint or an Archangel may improve in knowledge or perception, but he will be a saint or an Archangel through eternity.

But Theosophy, and it alone, proclaims the ultimate reunion of the human to the Divine. Just how individual consciousness is to be maintained after absorption into the universal consciousness is, of course, an insoluble mystery, though not any more baffling to finite intelligence than is the conception of God, and not any more contradictory than are the terms "Infinite" and "Absolute" as applied to Him. In some way not destructive or extinguishing, the wandering spark is brought back to the parent flame, the emanation is restored to its source,—as Edwin Arnold beautifully puts it, "The dewdrop slips into the shining sea."

At the beginning of religious thought, then, the Theosophist parts company from other religionists. His divergent path leads him through regions very different in their scenery and quality; other lights play upon the landscape and illuminate it; other feelings animate and sway the pilgrim. So diverse are his conceptions from those general around him that he is a little puzzled to explain them to inquirers. They have no common ground of meeting, no common view point for existence. When they endeavor to approach for an understanding, they come finally to that original question wherein, as we have seen, there is separation at the outset. How is it possible, except in some fragmentary parts, to make the Theosophic scheme comprehensible to an opponent? Perhaps some of us have learned this from experience.

Between the original question and the practical application of Theosophy to daily life lies a broad zone of doctrine and thought. If the destiny of man is restoration to Divinity, every intervening period must lack permanency. To be an Initiate is a glittering gain, but it is not a goal; to be a Master, marvellous as He is, does not end the course; to be a Dhyan Chôhan, even, is not final. Thus every stage, however lofty and long, is seen to be but a stage, for the only eternal, immutable Reality is still far beyond. And if that truth is very deeply realized, the aspirant's gaze seems to project itself towards the infinite, passing lightly over the marvels and æons between, losing sense of fixedness or lastingness in anything short of ultimate being. When he recalls it to his surroundings, petty and pitiable after such a flight, he is revolted and appalled. But instantly he is braced by the remembrance of Evolution, the knowledge that Boundless Wisdom has so ordered progress that it must be gradual, the little-becoming the great only as it is fitted to be so, the soul mounting to

higher realms but as it has gained the strength and lightness to sustain itself there.

“Stronger than woe is will: that which was good  
Doth pass to better, best.”

If all these intervening periods, manifold and wearisome, had not been necessary, they would not have been exacted. He shares in the universal order, is a part of the whole evolving scheme, is safe and sure within the protection of the great system. His very inclusion is his security: *not* to be in process of evolution would be an outcasting from Nature, an abortion in the many births. The very fact that he is a man and not an animal, the fact that he is a Theosophist and not a sectarian, shows that he is already on the upward way. What if he is not near its end! It is enough to know that he has begun.

The doctrine of matter is another content of the zone I referred to. If, as Plato held, every form is a visible expression of an idea antecedent in the Divine mind, the type being a crystallization of the archetype, that idea was impressed upon matter by will. First the thought, then the determination, last the thing. The Bible indicates it in the passage, “And God said ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light.” Will, then, is the efficient cause of action. It is the unseen force which produces all movement. But if so, it is the motor along the way of evolution, and its strength must determine the rate. When the Theosophist, fresh from the contemplation of all the possibilities of humanity, looks at the pettiness, the stupidity, the narrow intelligence, the partial views, the mean dispositions so thick on every hand, sees the ignoble ambitions, the contemptible rivalries, the belittling selfishness so blatant around, he may feel nauseated at the spectacle, but he certainly will not account for it by any poverty of Nature’s forces or any shortcoming in Divine interest. The obvious explanation is the feebleness of human will, a feebleness which prevents that effort after higher ideals which would lift out of the sordid and the small. Any want of attainment in himself must be due to the same cause. And so he does not hurl the blame on Fate or attempt to circumvent results by casting his sins on another and appropriating to himself that other’s moral qualities, expecting to masquerade through eternity in the character of some one else, but simply applies the cure to the evil. He strengthens his will. As each opposition occurs he braces himself to overcome it, knowing very well that, if he is to advance on the path of progress, he must advance by the law of progress. He will be aided thereto, for all the best forces are on his side, but he will not be trans-

ported or shoved or pitchforked into bliss. If he reaches it, it will be because he has tried.

Take another of the contents of that zone. As the Theosophist inspects the phenomena of human life, he sees that much of the trouble from which no one is exempt arises from the material conditions in which that life is passed, but he sees also that no small part is from the abuse of those conditions. Not a little sickness and pain both of body and soul could be saved if men treated matter with reason and moderation, expecting no more from it than it can give, not supposing that happiness is to come from sources lower than the plane whereon the feeler of happiness abides. He perceives that in the interaction of matter and spirit are great springs of profit, it being a provision of Nature that at this stage of human progress much is to be gained by extracting from physical surroundings a valuable experience. But it will not be extracted if those surroundings are mutilated or avoided or slurred over. We learn ourselves through knowing other men, and we learn life by undergoing it, and we learn Nature by getting in touch with her. And so the Theosophist, fully believing that perfection will come only after ultimate emancipation from matter, yet sees that the first steps to it come through association with matter, and uses matter and all its concomitants as an aid to his evolution. He is not an ascetic, nor is he a sensualist, but he does his duty in the sphere of life wherein he has been placed, and he finds duty accomplished recur to him as strength acquired.

Take one more content. Science has shown that both in biology and in sociology there is an advance in evolution according to the law known as the "survival of the fittest." One aspect of this is that the weaker go under in the competitive strife, or, to put it differently, that one individual can succeed only as a number fail. In these departments there is a consequent tendency to heartlessness, the instinct of self-preservation over-riding generous love of kind. But in that larger evolution which the Theosophist contemplates, the rule is otherwise. The part is not furthered at the expense of the whole, nor can the part be furthered by disregarding the whole. Every tingling spiritual impulse exudes from the individual into the mass, quickening and elevating it; and any impulse for mere personal progress regardless of all would be a severance from the universal life and so a crippled, stunted thing. One of our revered Masters was most emphatic in his teaching that we are all members of one body and that the whole body suffers or prospers as any member suffers or prospers, the hand by no means strengthening at the expense of the foot, or the head being enriched by depletion of the heart. This fact tends to

broaden the Theosophist's sympathies, to dull the ever-present sense of self, to fuse his humanness with the grand total of humanity. Greediness is not merely unworthy; it is destructive radically, and it is self-destructive.

There are many more doctrines and facts and thoughts to be encountered on the zone which one traverses on his way from the original question to the practical application of Theosophy in daily life. There are matters pertaining to the whole theory of the universe and of the varied worlds and beings therein, matters pertaining to this earth, its history, and our place in it, matters concerning our race, our nation, our families, ourselves. As to each of them the Theosophist finds himself at variance with conventional beliefs, and his whole equipment of convictions and expectations and motives is so different from that general around him that he seems almost to belong to another creation. It is inevitable, therefore, that as he approaches practical questions he should do so at a divergent angle and with by no means the same spirit. He has a deep sense of the impermanency of all being short of the Ultimate; he has nerved himself to work out his own salvation through relentless will; while contemning material life, he uses it fully for purposes of growth, performing every duty lovingly as a tribute to right; and he expects to grow just as he is self-obliterating, helpful, more alive to what he can do than to what he can get.

Place in the midst of a community a Theosophist thus equipped, and what will be his conduct in it? In the first place, he will be entirely independent. As he does not share either the convictions or the pettinesses of men around, it would be absurd for him to act as if he did. The sneering gibes of the materialist and the vindictive falsehoods of the orthodox do not annoy him, for he understands perfectly that men can act only from such knowledge as they possess, and that to be ignorant and at the same time liberal is an impossible thing. Being unaffected by the disapproval of smaller minds, he always, though with scrupulous regard to the rights of others in their sphere, does exactly as he likes in his own. One who has drunk the fresh air of a universal science and bathed in the sunbeams of a universal truth is too free and vigorous for any slavish moulding to trumpery dicta of small conventionalists. He departed from that era long ago.

Very evidently, too, the occupations of life have a different flavor. It is obligatory that they be pursued and pursued thoroughly, but the element of personal distinction has abated. A Theosophist may justly accumulate property or acquire professional reputation or gain political prominence; but Theosophy has

taken out of the effort the motive for mere ambitious renown, and put in its place that of conscientious effort to do the very best with the powers given one, that of using the result for the good of the race, for the vindication of justice, for the promotion of sound statesmanship. It would be a very lamentable thing if Theosophy atrophied business sagacity, professional energy, or public spirit; but why should it when it substitutes as a stimulus the elevation of a host for the elevation of but one?

I think also that an equipped Theosophist treats the sorrows of life with a *more intelligent* sympathy. He does not at all deny the reality of any grief or regard it coolly, but he discriminates between them according to the degree in which they have been self-incurred. You may say, indeed, that every human ill is karmic; yet there is evidently a vast difference between the man who has been impoverished through drink and the man who has been impoverished through consumption, between one wounded in a duel and one wounded by a gas explosion in a New York street. If there is a difference, to refuse to recognize it is either bravado or maudlinness. It is to be noted, furthermore, that, as the possibilities of aid are but limited in any one person, to expend them recklessly on the unworthy is to preclude succor to the worthy. If you have but a dollar for charity and you divide it between the drunkard and the tramp, how are you to help the industrious widow or the destitute orphan? The Theosophist sees that sympathy, like every other human function, needs to be disciplined into right action, and he sees it the more clearly because his large vision through the worlds of evolution and Karma has taught him the wisdom of Nature's curative economy, and the danger of supplanting it by an emotional impulse. All his training, and the broader and deeper the more surely, develops in him a discriminating trait, and he conforms his sympathies to the principles illustrated in the great universe of being, rather than lets them become rambling or flabby.

What an attractive world this would be if all men were Theosophists, and if each of them understood Theosophy correctly and practised it consistently! We have never yet seen the spectacle even of a Theosophic nation. Nations under the influence of a national religion are not uncommon. Several exist in the East, sleeping Turkey and Egypt illustrate what may be done under Mahometanism, and Europe, forever arming if not fighting, shows what Christian peoples consider compatible with Christianity. I do not say that these spectacles are alluring. We may conceive of one, however, where the principle of mutual help has displaced that of aggression; where justice and right and kindliness and self-

abnegation have become the pervading springs to action; where there is no need of watchfulness, for there is no disposition to fraud; where there is unlimited freedom of thought and an ungrudging welcome to new thought; where activity is sleepless and yet unprompted by ambition; where sufferings have died down through the coöperation of self-restraint with intelligent help; where progress upward and onward is checked by no demagogical influence, by no class jealousy or dispute; where true science reaps the harvests of Nature, and perpetual peace conserves them.

You will say that no such conception has ever been exemplified on earth. No, but it would be if Theosophy was applied practically to the affairs of daily life.

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# THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: AMERICAN SECTION.

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## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

[Neither the Theosophical Society nor any officer thereof is responsible for the contents of any Paper in this series.]

### A Practical View of Karma.

[*A Paper read before the Boston T. S. Feb. 26, 1891, by M. J. Barnett.*]

THE subject of Karma is so immense that the little any one person can say regarding it in limited time and space seems almost like leaving it untouched. Nevertheless it is for each of us to take our own little view of it and appropriate and assimilate as much as we can, and not feel discouraged that we cannot at once grasp the whole.

We, as members of the Theosophical Society, feel it to be our duty as well as pleasure to enlighten those who have not reached our point of advance in our special line of thought, yet we are not teachers so much as we are *pupils*. If as pupils and co-workers we are able not only to shed our light upon some outside of our organization, but also to stimulate one another to greater spiritual effort and increased mental activity, then it seems plainly our duty to endeavor to do so, even though our undertaking may not redound brilliantly to our own personalities.

Karma, variously defined as sequence, ethical causation, consequence, etc., we understand to be the working of the great law of cause and effect, and, broadly speaking, it obtains in all the kingdoms of nature throughout the whole universe. Our work in relation to this universal law, however, seems to lie in that limited circle in which individualized self-conscious man is struggling his way upward on the great spiral of evolution.

As the *Secret Doctrine* tells us, our earth like other globes has to form, to consolidate, to settle, and to harden, and then gradually

return to its first ethereal form, all which processes result from their own respective producing causes. But in the working of the law of cause and effect as manifested in the macrocosm, or great world, we have as yet nothing to do. Our work is in the microcosm, the little world which constitutes ourselves, and we must become a monarch in that little kingdom before we can become a ruler of planets. We are too much inclined to overlook what we consider the small work and reach out for the greater, without realizing that it is only through the smaller that we can ever reach the greater.

Some of us think if we possess ourselves of a great amount of Theosophic lore, we are sufficiently raised in the scale of being, even though we apply none of it to our daily life and work and intercourse with our fellow beings. That is one reason why theosophical study and the Theosophical Society is not more attractive to those outside of its pale. It is sometimes remarked : "Suppose the tenets of theosophy are true, what good do they do? Such a person is very learned in that direction, yet I do not see that he is any more unselfish or more honest or more moral in his life than he was before he came into this knowledge."

If we do not put our theories in practice, they certainly cannot accomplish any practical good.

Of course an intellectual interest in these subjects is better than no interest at all, as it starts a current in the right direction which may eventually lead to something vital, and theories are necessary in order to have something to put in practice, but until we do put them in practice neither we ourselves nor those around us are vitally benefitted. The world has a right to demand demonstration of the truth that is in us. The world should be able to see that, when we profess a belief in the saving tenets of theosophy, we to some degree *do* drop selfishness and other immoralities out of our lives. If all observers were able to see that a certain person after joining the Theosophical Society had at once become more upright in his daily life, it would do a thousand times more for Theosophy than the most learned disquisition on Karma or Reincarnation or *post-mortem* states.

As our President has wisely said, we need not go out into the by-ways and urge the reluctant into our midst, we need not proselyte, but we *must* let our light shine, in order that others may see that we are working for some vital, practical good to humanity, and may thereby be attracted to our midst.

We do not mean to intimate that all good is confined within the Theosophical Society, but we do think that this Society offers undoubted advantages and aid to one endeavoring to uplift himself and to work for the benefit of humanity. As all the good work

done through the material body is not accomplished by the brain alone, as a *brain*, but much that is equally important is done by its ramifications in nerves extending throughout the physical structure and performing each its own peculiar function, just so all theosophic work is not done in the Theosophical Society as a *society*, but much is accomplished by its ramifications extending throughout the social body of humanity at large. In this individual private work we have all the advantages accruing from our relation to a center of united effort, whose energy we have helped to create or attract into our midst, and an influx of which we bear with us wherever we go and in whatever altruistic endeavor we may be engaged.

It is truly said that the united energy of any number of persons equals the square of that number. So we, as members of the Theosophical Society and related to the sphere of this multiplied force, ought on that account to do a much greater work than could otherwise be accomplished. This work should be both intellectual and spiritual, the one or the other preponderating according to our present respective individual developments. In the mean time, however, if our spiritual nature is not yet sufficiently evolved for us to accomplish the highest work, then it is for us to recognize and supply that deficiency as soon as possible.

The unfoldment of the intellect alone may make a black magician, but even though the intellect be directed to spiritual knowledge it will not of itself enable one to accomplish the highest good. That perfect skill in spiritual work which constitutes a true adept is earned by the practice of good in conjunction with the pursuit of knowledge. Were the black magician to desire suddenly, at any given moment, to accomplish the highest beneficent work, he would not be able to do so, because he would not have qualified himself for it by the only possible preliminary training, the practice of altruism.

Mr. Bertram Keightley, at the inauguration of the European Headquarters for Theosophy, in referring to his American experiences said he found that members of the Society in America devote themselves with great energy and seriousness to a study of the philosophy, and especially the ethics, of Theosophy. But we think there is among us still room for improvement in this direction.

In *The Voice of the Silence* we read, "Seek, O beginner, to blend thy mind and soul," which, as we understand it, means that we are to seek for the equal unfoldment of our spiritual and intellectual natures. Again, in the same little book, we are told to learn above all to separate head-learning from soul-wisdom, the "eye" from the "heart" doctrine. At first view it may seem like a contradiction to tell us to blend, and then tell us to separate, the

mind and soul, or the head and heart, but we think that this separating means only distinguishing one from the other so that we may not confound the two and feel that we possess both when we have only one, for later, on the same page, we are told that even ignorance is better than head-learning with no soul-wisdom to illuminate and guide it. These passages as a whole seem to teach us plainly that both are necessary, but that if either is dispensed with, head-learning rather than soul-wisdom should be the one. By blending the two we shall lay an intelligent and wise hold upon the great doctrine of Karma, as upon all other doctrines, and shall be both loving and wise in our ministrations to others.

Our practical work as Theosophists is to teach others so to regulate their lives that they will wisely exhaust their bad Karma and constantly generate good Karma, but we cannot teach this lesson in the best way until we have learned it ourselves, and successfully applied it to our own lives.

In the present condition of humanity there is not so much thought about causation as about result. Karma as effect and as ill effect, or what we call bad Karma, presents itself forcibly to the average mind, not necessarily under the name of Karma, but inevitable evil, and this great burden of evil under which the world is groaning seems mightier than the ever-present good, which can become its conquerer.

How to relieve the degradation, sin, and suffering of humanity, which is greatly among those ignorant of the word Karma, but who are nevertheless under its pressure, is the great problem of all philanthropists. There is always a *best* way to accomplish anything, and we think that, in order to present the tenets of Theosophy in the most helpful way, we must glean and offer from them, as a starting point, all that is encouraging.

If a man comes to us groaning under his oppressive Karmic burdens, we do *not* say to him, "All your misery is a benefit to you and therefore you ought to enjoy it. You must work it out to the bitter end. You have left the cause of it behind you and therefore beyond your control, and if you continue to make bad Karma your higher principles may eventually leave you to end your career in that horrible eighth sphere, which is a thing so appalling that it can be understood by only the initiated." We do not present Theosophy in such a strain or in such colors as this. We do not believe in preaching what is called the hell-fire doctrine in Theosophy any more than in orthodox religion. It is as bad in the one as in the other. No doubt there is such a thing as the dark side of Theosophy, but if it is a truth it is only part of the great truth as a whole, and not the most helpful part.

We are obliged to go through darkness in order to arrive at light, but it is light and not darkness that we are seeking. We should not present the dark side of Theosophic truth without an offset to the picture in an available remedy. There certainly are dark spots in the world all around us, but we do not want to fix a pessimistic gaze upon darkness. We want to get out of darkness into light, and the only way to do so is to turn our glance to the one little shining ray that is always within us.

If there is one truth more than another that Theosophy seems to tell us, it is that darkness is ultimately dissipated by light, that good is supreme and the all in all. This teaching is handed down to us from the Egyptians of ages and ages ago, in the celebration of their festivals at the emblematical season of the winter solstice, when light always comes off victorious over darkness.

If truths that now, in our present condition, seem dark and discouraging must be presented, let us always give with them enough encouraging truth to render them acceptable.

We help our brothers carry their Karmic burdens only by teaching them the best way to carry them for themselves.

If any one comes to us groaning under what he considers the curse of blindness resulting from a cruel accident, instead of telling him, what may be perfectly true, that he has probably brought it all upon himself by past cruelty to his fellow beings, we tell him that it is his own way of accepting the inevitable that makes it a curse to him, that although it may be a load of Karma that he must bear, yet there are two ways of carrying a burden. We may bear a burden groaning and complaining, and thus deplete ourselves of strength and courage so that the burden is almost more than we can endure, or we may adjust ourselves to the inevitable and bear it cheerfully and hopefully, and thus fortify and encourage ourselves so that it seems light. The difference in these two cases is only in ourselves, yet that difference is everything to us. Some blind people are the most useful and the happiest people in the world. The aim of our desire for eyesight is, or should be, usefulness and happiness, but if we gain these without the eyesight, then we have made a stride right over that line of our bad Karma.

It is not the *actual* weight of a burden that matters to us, it is its relative weight, its weight in relation to our strength. One person can carry a pound more easily than another can carry an ounce. If we strengthen ourselves, our burden is virtually lightened.

Let us take for a simple illustration the case of two boys of equal muscular strength, who have equal burdens that they are obliged to bear from one certain point to another. The first boy says, "I hate to carry it. It is so *heavy*. Then I might be having

such a good time at play if I did not have this dreadful work to do." His mind is depressed, and, as a result which we all can understand, his nerves and his muscles are also depressed and lessened in activity, for the currant of his vitality is obstructed and cannot enter fully into them. He takes up his burden because he is positively obliged to do so. His very feet are heavy in addition to the burden, as he drags himself towards the goal which seems hopelessly distant.

The second boy proceeds so differently. He says, "Well, if I have it to do, I might as well do it cheerfully. I do not believe I shall find it very heavy because I am strong enough to carry it, and the sooner I go and get through with it the sooner I shall get to play again." As we would expect, his will turned in the right direction has sent vitality into his nerves and muscles, and he takes up the burden with alacrity and starts off briskly on his way.

Now, the only difference in these two cases is in the boys themselves, in their way of accepting the inevitable. To the first boy the burden is heavy, and as he proceeds slowly and stops frequently to set it down and rest, he is a long time reaching the desired point. To the second boy the burden is light, and as he is diligent and does not waste his energy or loiter along the road, he the sooner reaches the goal and is then freed from the imposed burden.

It is just so with us, in all our bad Karma. We may not only lighten it in this way, but we may accelerate the process of exhausting it, so that we arrive the sooner at the end of it. The quality and quantity of our Karma are fixed upon us by our past course, but the time required to exhaust it, and the manner of this process, are left for us to decide; they are, within certain limits, under our control.

If, for example, we have poverty to contend with, it is not for us to sink down under it and feel that it is more than we can bear, and thus increase its weight, for no Karma is more than we can bear. Karma is a master who never gives us a task beyond our strength, and if we sink under any of his burdens it is because we have misused the strength that is ours. We must always realize that we have earned our bad Karma ourselves, and therefore we ought to bear it cheerfully. Dr. Jerome A. Anderson, one of our ablest Theosophists, in a late article says that the man who finds himself in a diseased or deformed body cannot, under the teachings of Theosophy, charge it to accident or injustice or carelessness or indifference on the part of some God, but must recognize it as the result of the karmic fiends, those unexhausted kama loka causes, created during his past incarnation, which have followed

him into the only place where they could be satisfied—that of physical life.

While, on the one hand, it may seem discouraging that our woes are inevitable as the result of our unalterable past, on the other hand it is most encouraging to know that we are almost unlimited rulers of our future. The most insignificant good act, or even thought or intention which we may be prevented from putting forth into act, will be sure to bring its full reward. We sometimes feel that we have desired to accomplish a beneficent work but have been prevented, and that therefore our good efforts have all been thrown away; but this is a great mistake. Karma keeps a strict account of all energy expended on any plane, and places to our credit the exact amount due, and repays the debt upon the plane on which it was contracted. Physical acts bring results upon the physical plane, energy expended by the mind brings results on the mental plane, and energy expended in pure aspirations and desires will bring good results on the spiritual plane. But these results, though based upon their own respective planes, are not wholly confined there; they are reflected from the higher planes upon the lower, and working outward influence the whole being. We cannot have high spiritual aspirations without benefitting ourselves as a whole, and we cannot be spiritually corrupt without infecting ourselves throughout our whole being.

Any bad Karma that we may have to endure is the only cure for our former transgression of divine law in that direction, and the sooner we turn it to good account the sooner we shall exhaust it. While we are turning it to good account, the process is so salutary and so blended with the generation of good Karma that we are scarcely conscious of the bad.

With regard to poverty, it is our way of viewing our possessions that for the most part makes us poor. Our material wants are never all supplied until we cease to desire anything beyond our legitimate reach, so even the work of growing rich is to be accomplished within ourselves. When we waste our energy in lamentations we employ the poorest *economy* in the world. But if we turn all our evil into good, which in its last analysis it really is, we bring forth our baser metals from our spiritual alembic in the form of pure gold, and thus prove ourselves true alchemists.

Though poverty is generally comparative, yet of course there is such a thing as positive want in which the human body is perishing from hunger and cold, where karmic conditions are so crushing that seemingly one could never rise up out of them unaided. In such cases the Theosophist, like every other philanthropist, begins his work by supplying the physical needs. In his endeavor to

lighten the Karma of humanity about him, he works on the physical as well as on the mental and spiritual planes. One man's immediate need may be food and clothing, another's a lesson in Karmic law, another's a stimulation to more unselfishness.

In our individual work as we go through the world there is nothing more important than the cultivation of that nice discrimination which leads us to offer to others precisely what they, at any given moment, need and are ready to receive. In this we have an example in the unerring intuition of the Adepts or Masters, who understand just when and how much of their knowledge to offer to the world, and who of course regulate the yielding of their occult power for the good of humanity with the same discriminating beneficence. While they only can accomplish the great work of lightening the Karma of whole nations, we surely can attempt the small work of lightening individual Karma, and we can proceed on the same general principles as their work is founded, those of skilled altruistic endeavor.

We find that with the mass of humanity around us there is a clearer apprehension of Karmic law, and a more readily awakened interest in its workings, when presented as something involving immediate as well as future results. A person of limited intelligence is better able to see an effect when it follows closely upon its cause than when it reaches out into the future, which to him is dim and speculative.

Mr. Alexander Fullerton in that most excellent little pamphlet, *The Wilkesbarre Letters*, says that not a few, usually the smaller, acts of men effect immediate results to the body or the mind.

The law of Karma, which is all-embracing, certainly *does* include the most infinitesimal of our thoughts, words, and deeds no less than it includes those mighty energies, the accumulation of strong thought and fixed habit, which in a sweeping current roll onward into the ages and color many a future incarnation.

In *Esoteric Buddhism* we read, "Nor is it to be supposed that every event of a current life, which bestows joy or sorrow, is old Karma bearing fruit. Many may be the immediate consequences of acts in the life to which they belong—ready money transactions with nature, so to speak, of which it may be hardly necessary to make any entry in her books."

The little seeds which we are constantly sowing along with the great ones are of such rapid germination that they spring up like mushrooms in our daily path. We are all of us aware, to some extent, of the working of this immediate Karma. We have all of us witnessed the fungous growth of certain small seeds that we have just sown. If this sowing be in the direction of good Karma,

it can do much towards brightening our lives, however darkly they may seem to be colored by the effect of long-forgotten causation. If, on the other hand, it is little seeds of bad karma that we are sowing, however unimportant they may be in comparison with what is greater, we reap thereby an incredible amount of discomfort and suffering, even in the midst of otherwise good conditions.

We often see those of whom we say that they have not a misfortune in the world and still they are unhappy. They seem to have brought with them no bad Karma on the physical plane, but much on the moral plane in their own crooked dispositions. They seem outwardly to have all that one could desire, and they do nothing but *try* to enjoy it, but they are perhaps full of inordinate desires for possessions beyond their present abundance, or they morbidly lament their lack of talents which they have never earned and which even now they are not willing to make the effort to begin to earn, or they are striving for place and power for which they have not fitted themselves, or they are sore at heart because some one else is always surpassing them in something, all which are different forms of selfishness that tend speedily to exhaust all their good Karma, even on the physical plane, and to land them in future poverty. And it is not their future alone that is thereby impoverished, but they also thus create misery and misfortune for each day of the present.

We once heard a lady say that while driving in her carriage one morning she met a friend dressed in such a peculiar costume made of a material of which she herself had heard but had never been able to find in the market, that a sight of it so distressed her that it made her feel faint, that her shopping plans all went out of her head, and she turned back and went home and was good for nothing the remainder of the day.

Envy, a Karma as causation, brought its immediate effect in her mind and her body. And many a mind of stronger texture than hers is incapacitated through this same kind of causation.

A person sometimes thinks how very generous he would be were he not so limited in means, and at the same time he fails to give of his little.

If we are generous at heart we can never be too poor to manifest generosity, and the fact that we have little at our disposal seems to indicate that at some time in the past we have had an abundance and have *not* been generous with it, and our only cure lies in our limited means, a bad Karma to which we only add daily by working on in the same line with the same disposition.

We have known a hungry beggar cheerfully share his last

morsel with a starving neighbor, which seemed to indicate that he was learning his lesson, and was fast advancing on the road that led to the end of that line of his bad Karma.

We knew of an Italian beggar who, always generous with his chance pittance and happy in the rags and tatters to which he was born, suddenly won in the royal lottery what to him was a large fortune, and he used that large fortune well. His generosity in the most adverse circumstances seemed to have exhausted that line of his bad Karma, and not only so, but to have brought him an immediate result in daily happiness during the process.

The avarice of Shylock earned for him not only the loss of gold that he worshiped, but a miserable life full of fears and dark forebodings all the way up to that final disastrous event.

The inordinate love of power and of valuable territory of Napoleon seems to have landed him powerless and wretched in the close confines of a desert island.

The gratification of any of our desires that are wrong in degree or kind will be sure to land us in corresponding effects, which will be only the fruitage of the seeds we have sown.

We all know that if we indulge in anger against any one, or in hatred or envy of our fellow-beings, that from the Karma we thus generate we shall immediately reap an unhappy and incapable condition of mind, which will be quite likely to ultimate itself in physical disorders. Inharmonious vibrations set up on the spiritual plane extend outward through the mental to the physical plane, the ultimate of expression, and all impure feelings are inharmonious, they are discordant with divine law.

If, for example, we hear a man say that a fellow whom he hated came into his office yesterday and so upset him that he made mistakes in his accounts all the afternoon, and at night was seized with one of his bilious attacks, we feel that he has logically followed out the immediate working of Karma, but with one grave and important misapprehension in his premise. He thinks that the fellow whom he hated generated the Karma that he reaped, whereas it was wholly of his own sowing.

Who ever heard of an indulgence in hatred engendering that tranquillity of mind which is necessary for a command of our mental powers, and a harmonious distribution of vital currents throughout the physical body? We can no more reap good from sowing evil than we can gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles, and if it were possible to do so it would be the worst thing in the world for us, as then we would never overcome the evil. So long as we make bad Karma we need to reap bad Karma, and no spiritual good is accomplished by working to avoid the mental and

physical results of our own misuse of vital energy. The only spiritual, therefore radical, cure lies in the sowing of the seed.

To quote again from *The Voice of the Silence*, "For it is written; 'teach to eschew all causes; the ripple of effect, as the great tidal wave, thou shalt let run its course.'

As soon as we begin to make good Karma we are most assuredly preparing a good harvest for the future, whether that future be immediate or far-reaching, and we think it is frequently both. There is scarcely any good or evil that we sow that will not bring *some* immediate harvest, at the same time the immediate result is rarely ever the whole result. With those of us who are living above the animal plane, impure feeling and thought bring immediate discomfort, but this is not all; we thereby help to build up a character for the future which will determine our Karmic conditions for our next incarnation. Our character is made by us in the same way as the mason makes his edifice, by building it up stone by stone until the structure is complete, and no grain of sand is too insignificant to aid in cementing the parts together to form the entire whole. Indeed, as the builder will tell us, these united grains of sand sometimes form the most solid and enduring part of the masonry. Our character is but an aggregation of Karmic results both great and small.

Though we may not be able to reach out in mind into the distant past and see clearly all the workings of Karmic law, yet we can see and infer enough in our daily lives to prove to our satisfaction that there is such a law, and that it must, in the nature of infinite love and wisdom, be always strict justice. So if at any time there is a seeming injustice, we know that it is only a seeming which comes from our lack of knowledge. We may feel sure that, if we work to overcome evil with good, a heritage of good is already ours.

The factor of our being that we must employ in order to effect this good, in order to earn our good Karma, is will. Will seems to be the preordained tool with which we are to accomplish all things, and it must be our will and not another person's will. Will being the expression of desire, we must first desire, and then express or press outward that desire into act. Dr. Franz Hartmann in *Magic, Black and White*, says that a man may will that which he does not desire. In harmony with theosophic teaching, we understand this seeming paradox to mean that the Higher Self may will that which the lower self may not desire. The Higher Self may have one desire, and the lower self another conflicting one, and the victory is with that one to which we direct the will, or which we by direction and effort press outward into actuality. If, for

example, our Higher Self desires to appropriate a certain sum of money for the relief of a suffering brother, and our lower self at the same time desires to employ that sum for a personal gratification, we can become deaf to the clamor of the inferior voice and listen to the Voice of the Silence only by turning our attention, our consciousness, and our will to the nobler desire and pressing it forth into act. There is in reality no sacrifice in this, as we falsely imagine, for we are thereby gratifying Self, the Higher Self instead of the lower self, the only real enduring Self. The question is not, then, shall we sacrifice self, but which self shall we gratify? The gratification of the Higher Self so conjoins us with the universal spirit of all good, and engenders such harmonies on the higher plane of our being, as, by extending their vibrations down to the outermost plane, at length to convince even that lower self that it has reaped gain instead of loss.

The habitual making of good Karma depends upon the habitual direction of the will to a higher instead of a lower plane. In order to gain the necessary power over our will, and by repeated exercise of it in the right direction to form this habit, we need to turn our attention and our consciousness more away from the material plane and look upward to something higher and more enduring.

We notice that it seems so easy for some persons to make good Karma, they appear to make so little effort in their choice of good instead of evil. If the choice of good is now easy for them, it is either because they have not yet reached their stage of temptation in the given line, or because they have acquired ascendancy over their lower self by previous effort in transforming lower desires into higher ones. If they are now able to resist temptation by a strong and well-disciplined will, it is because they have become skilled in the administration of their will by a right use of it in former incarnations, for the will never can have become strong and well-controlled without great and repeated effort. If we lack this power it is because we have not made the necessary effort in previous lives, and there is no other proof of this fact needed than the ever-present one of the Karma we have brought with us, in a character not yet strengthened in good. If we lay the blame upon circumstances or upon our peculiar organization, these are only secondary causes and form a part of that very Karma which we have ourselves created. There is no royal road to spirituality. What we would have we must earn. There is no such thing, even in our advanced civilization, as the generation of good Karma made easy for luxurious indolence. It is by effort and by effort only that we are enabled to set our feet upon the Path. If we shrink from this effort when it is only effort without suffering,

we thereby add to our account such suffering as shall at length render us willing to make the effort. To turn our wills in the right direction without being forced to it by pain and sorrow is the part of wisdom and economy, for it is working on the plane of great results without loss of time. The *Secret Doctrine* says it is a law of occult dynamics that a given amount of energy expended on the spiritual or astral plane is productive of far greater results than the same amount expended on the physical, objective plane of existence.

To gain a knowledge of immutable law, and then adjust ourselves to its decrees by conjoining our will with the universal will, is to produce harmony throughout our whole being. To glean again from the *Secret Doctrine*, "The only decree of Karma is absolute harmony in the world of matter as it is in the world of spirit. It is not therefore Karma that rewards or punishes, but it is we who reward or punish ourselves according to whether we work with, through, and along with nature, abiding by the laws on which that harmony depends, or—break them. Nor would the ways of Karma be inscrutable were men to work in union and harmony instead of disunion and strife. For our ignorance of those ways would surely disappear if we would but attribute all these to their correct cause. Knowledge of Karma gives the conviction that if "Virtue in distress and vice in triumph make atheists of mankind, it is only because that mankind has ever shut its eyes to the great truth that man is himself his own savior as his own destroyer." It is the repugnance to this truth that keeps us down in ignorance. We need to break ourselves of the old delusive habit of ascribing our misfortunes, which are our bad Karma, to anything or any one rather than to ourselves. So long as we accept all the good that comes to us the result of chance or the favor of a partial Deity, and all the evil as some mal-adjustment of cause to effect, just so long we will exert no energy to better our spiritual condition. A belief in our own powers is the very foundation-stone of our salvation. If we have made our present bad Karma, then, clearly and logically, it lies within our power to make our future good Karma.

But, strictly speaking, we do not need to direct our attention to the making of Karma at all. We simply want to pursue right, and good Karma will be the natural inevitable result. At first we make an effort to pursue right because it is right, but by so doing we conjoin ourselves with universal good and thereby become so imbued with its spirit that at length we learn to love good and pursue it by natural selection. It is needless to say, however, that we of the average humanity have not yet arrived at this point in

our evolution. We are not yet beyond a desire for, and a calculation of, results, and as it is by the way of smaller things that we come up into greater things, we find it necessary to begin the work of transforming ourselves by regarding small causes and immediate effects, as we have indicated in what we have taken the liberty to call "Immediate Karma." It is by the analogy of inferior to superior things, of the low to the high, that we are enabled to gain our first slight apprehension of what is above and beyond us, and the little light that thus breaks upon us stimulates us to reach out towards a plane of stronger causation and more extended result.

The fact that we can realize a something beyond our present attainments and see that it is possible to beings more advanced than we, indicates that we ourselves have the power to attain to it at some future period. We must pass from our low degree through all the intermediate stages before we can reach that high theosophic stand on which our attitude is one of perfect indifference to all result, with no thought of either bad or good Karma.



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### **Jesus the Initiate.**

[*Read by Mrs. Veronica M. Beane, San Francisco.*]

**T**O give a just portrayal of the character of Jesus as an Initiate, or to enter into a history of the sources of the Occult Mysteries, which would include the inner history of all nations, requires more time than at my disposal.

It is sufficient to declare they were in existence, have been preserved, with the evidences of spiritual gifts and powers practiced under peculiar conditions and circumstances by Initiates and Adepts who, to protect themselves from materialistic and spiritually ignorant rulers, formed combinations and societies for the security of those whose daily surroundings and daily conditions of life were required to be free from interruption in order to lead the life that led to divine knowledge. There are few to-day who know the meaning and the original basis of these occult truths, while those who have the real knowledge from the source Divine clasp hands with India, with Arabia, with China and Egypt across the great belt of the years and ages that have intervened, and know whereof they testify.

Ever since the beginning of the Christian era a storm of varied opinions in regard to Jesus has been raging in the world of mind, finding its expression on the external plane in deeds of violence, cruelties, and crimes such as are almost beyond the power of human imagination to conceive. From the time of the Roman Emperors, when the arenas were reddened by the blood of the Nazarenes, down to the Middle Ages when Christians had ceased to be persecuted and became persecutors in their turn, when

Europe pillaged and plundered the inhabitants of the Holy Land in the assumed name of Jesus, down to comparatively modern times when the skies of all European countries were blackened by the smoke from burning faggots upon which men and women suspected of heresy were burnt to death by those who claimed to be the followers of Him who taught the doctrine of universal and fraternal love; and still further down to our present time, in which the churches struggle to regain their waning powers and wealth, the cause of all religious warfare has always been a difference of opinion in regard to the nature of "Christ." While the most fanatical adherents of orthodox theology entirely ignored the religious histories of the world with its Avatars, Buddhas, and Saviors of mankind, such as are said to have appeared upon this globe thousands of years before the advent of Modern Christianity, they regard the person of him who is called the "Christ" as being the "only begotten son" of an extra-cosmic creator of the world, conceived in some miraculous manner by a virgin of Palestine; and while they thus apply the most gross and sensual exoteric explanation to a beautiful ancient myth which hides a sublime and eternal truth, the modern critic either denies that such a person as the Jesus of Nazareth of the gospels ever existed, or he sees in him merely a man of extraordinary talents, a hero who dared to proclaim the truth, a religious reformer who died like many others for the promulgation of a grand but impracticable idea. Some of these critics are very profound thinkers; but they have evidently not looked behind the veil that divides the eternal, ideal, but nevertheless real, world from that of illusions wherein we live. They were unacquainted with the constitution of the spiritual organization of man, and they could only see the mortal part of Jesus, while their opinions in regard to his spiritual were based upon speculations which may have approached the truth in proportion as they followed their highest intuitions. Thus Kant regarded him as the ideal of human perfection; John Stuart Mill as an extraordinary man; Lord Amberly as an iconoclastic idealist; Fichte as the first teacher who revealed the unity of man with the Supreme Being; Hegel as an incarnation of the Logos; Schelling as a kind of Avatar, *i. e.*, one of the periodical descents of divinity; Dr. Keim as a mysterious man whose glorified spirit inspired his disciples to attempt the reformation of the world. Strauss looked upon him as a reformer, Renan as an Idealist, Schleiermacher as a man in whom self-consciousness was so saturated with the Divine principle that he really became a god incarnate, and Gerald Massey, who bases his opinions on historical researches, that He was born 120 years before the Christian era

and that the typical Christ of the Gospels was made up from the features of various gods.

If we examine the *New Testament* without prejudice and without any sectarian bias, we find therein two currents of thought. The first applies to the life of a man who must have been a great genius, a hero, and a reformer. The second current refers to sacred truths taught in the secret doctrines of the Aryans and Egyptians, truths which we find stated in the books of Hermes Trismegistus, in the *Bhagavat-Gitā*, and others. In these ancient books we find reference made to the Christ principle long before the name of Christianity was known, and the myths of the Immaculate Conception, etc. may be clearly traced to this ancient origin. The discovery, far from throwing discredit upon the veracity of the principles upon which primitive Christianity was based, serves rather to strengthen the foundation upon which the original doctrines rest: it does not overthrow the truths stated in the Bible, but goes to confirm them by showing that the processes thus allegorically described are not merely events of the past, but are continually occurring and will in all probability continue to occur in the future. "If we look at the image of Jesus seen through the trembling mists of incense mixed with the vapors of human blood and the smoke of burning heretics," we see merely an unnatural and distorted image—a ghastly-looking shadow that seems to be neither a god nor a man. If we look at him in his sublimity of character, with an unlimited love, a transcendental intelligence, such as are not found combined in one person in the modern history of the world, one of the full-grown flowers of humanity whose mind was illuminated by divine wisdom—an Initiate in the sacred mysteries, who possessed the knowledge of his own Higher Self—all that appears strange and impossible in his character becomes comprehensible, he having entered the mystic realm of occult science the key of which is the power of spiritual perception or intuition. Then he stands before us as an ideal man, and as a personification of Divine Wisdom, a divinely inspired man,—inspired not by any external personal Deity, but by the eternal light of Divine Wisdom that illuminated his mind. We can see him first as a teacher, a man of great talents who sought earnestly after the truth, and who, after having been admitted into the Egyptian mysteries, became an Adept. Having arrived at a knowledge of the truth, he heroically defended it against the priests of the temple, and sacrificed his life in the attempt to bring the life of the true Christ that existed within himself to the understanding of the masses. He attempted to dispel the clouds of darkness created by superstition and fear, so

that the light of spiritual knowledge might enter into the hearts of mankind.

The initiation of Jesus occurred after he had entered the Egyptian temple, where he was led into the presence of the assembled priests, who questioned him in regard to his object in desiring to enter their order, portraying to him the trials and sorrows he would incur. But Jesus was not intimidated, and eagerly sought that knowledge which was more valuable than life. He then became a member of the Egyptian Brotherhood. He was taught the laws of nature and made to see that there is nothing dead in nature, but that all forms are manifestations of the one Universal Power of life. He was taught the causes of the physical phenomena occurring in the world of phenomena, the nature of light and sound, of heat and electricity, etc. He was also instructed in astronomy and medicine, and in the science of hieroglyphics. (Iamblichus, in *Vita Pythorgo*.) In the spiritual nature of man were explained to him the laws of re-incarnation: how the human monad again and again descends to build up a mortal physical form and to evolve a new personality at each of its visits upon this globe; that the human forms which we know as men, women, and children are not the real man, but merely ever-changing consciousness, unsubstantial although living illusions, doomed to perish when the spirit retires to its home, to rest from its labor, while the substantial, indivisible, and incorruptible spirit is the real man, although invisible to the perception of mortals. Jesus, by his blameless life, the extraordinary talents and strength of character, the devotion of his entire life to the practical application of the truths that were taught him, passed to higher degrees which were of a very serious matter, having nothing in common with the idle ceremonies and misunderstood mysteries of modern secret societies. It was exceeding difficult to be admitted as a candidate, and still more difficult to pass through the prescribed trials, which were rather of an internal than external character. These mysteries cannot be explained, they are beyond the intellectual conception of mortals; they can only be perceived intuitively by the spiritual intelligence of man after he has become self-conscious of the divinity of God. Jesus underwent many severe trials to which those who desired to be initiated into the mysteries were subjected. He was taught many of these sublime secrets, or, to express it more correctly, as the bud of a lotus flower gradually opens under the influence of the sunlight, so his mind opened to the understanding of the divine mysteries of the Wisdom-Religion. He perceived that God has a spiritual and a material aspect, that he is all things, and that for this cause "He hath many

names, because He is the One Father, and that He also hath no name, for He is the Father of all" (*Hermes Trismegistus*, v. 33); that this one and universal Father had created the world in his own mind, endowed it with his own life, and thrown it into objectivity by his own will. He perceived and realized that this divine essence which caused the universe to take form and to grow is the same that forms the corner-stone of the living temple of God called man, and that the essence constituting the foundation and the innermost center of man is in no way different from that of the Universal God, and that therefore "earthly man is a little god in a mortal body, while the God of the Universe is an immortal, self-existent Man" (*Hermes Trismegistus*, v. 4). He found no death in the universe, but a continual change of form, while the Life that causes these changes of form remains always the same. That which is imperfect has to be re-modelled and to become perfect; but that which is perfect and therefore eternal requires no farther change. He saw that the whole of nature is a thing of Life, subject—like all living beings—to periods of activity and rest; that after a day of activity, lasting perhaps for millions of ages, the great phantasmagoria constituting the universe ceases to be manifest, and is followed by a night of equal duration, during which all things exist in a subjective condition in the mind of the creator, until "God" again awakens from his slumber, to speak once more the divine command.

Jesus the Initiate experienced a new state of existence, an interior illumination, in the solitude, and he saw that his personality was not his real self, but merely an instrument for the purpose of fulfilling a mission on this earth. Thus gaining a victory over his own illusive self, he entered the sanctuary of the Temple of Truth, becoming strong—a prophet and an Adept. Before his interior illumination took place, he had not known that firm conviction which he possessed now. He gained true knowledge and wisdom, and when, during his sermons, being carried away by his aspirations of truth he rose into the regions of divine thought, wisdom took form in him. It was not Jesus who spoke divinely inspired words, but it was Divine Wisdom that spoke through his lips. His whole being appeared on such occasions to be permeated by the "Light of the Logos;" yea, for all we know, it may have been the Logos itself manifesting through him. This may explain why, like the Avatars of old, he spoke of himself as being the "Christ", the "Truth", and the "Son of God". The spirit of wisdom that in ancient times had spoken through the mouth of Krishna, saying "I am the way, the supporter, lord, witness, abode, and friend" (*Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, 9:13), "I am the beginning, the

middle, and the end of all existing things" (*Bhagavad-Gītā*, 10:20), repeated these words through the lips of Jesus, saying "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (*John*, 14:6), "I am the Alpha and Omega—the beginning and the end" (*Revelations*, 1:8). And this divine spirit still continues to speak in the same manner in the heart of everyone who is able to rise above the sphere of self and to become for the time being one with his God.

The divine Light at the time of the initiation of Jesus and upon the Mount of Transfiguration filled his soul, illumined his mind, filling him with consolation and joy, so that he forgot he was an isolated being and realized his unity with the Eternal Father of all. The veil of matter which during his terrestrial life had hidden the sanctuary of the Temple of the Universal Spirit from the sight of his soul, was by death rent asunder, and the genius of Jesus went rejoicing back to the bosom of his Eternal Father, to receive his final initiation into that mystery which can be known only to those who have attained a state beyond all imaginable isolated existence, but which consists in becoming *one* with that which really *is* and in partaking of its divine nature and universal self-consciousness. The same voice that spoke in the heart of Jesus is ever speaking within our own, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one cometh unto the Father but by me.*" This Christ has never died, but man has spiritually died when he becomes unconscious of his existence. He has been always with us, but we knew it not, because our attention was attracted to our semi-animal self. He is our own God, the divine self of all men. He lives in that sphere where no separation and isolation exist, but where all are as one. He is ourselves, and we will be He if we merely open our eyes and become conscious of his divinity within us by living in accordance with his divine will. There is only one Supreme Law, the love of Absolute Good. When men become sated with the worship of self and of living on Dead Sea fruit, they will again return to the Temple of Wisdom to partake of the water of Truth, and thereby regain the power of spirit over matter, a power which is the natural birthright of immortal man.

In the third chapter of *John*, v. 13, it says, "Man has before him life and death, whatever he chooses will be given him." If he chooses to remain in darkness and ignorance, trusting that another will do his own work, his choice will be death in the spirit; if he wants to live he must work; for the truth when it once enters the heart will bring peace to the spirit, but to the soul it will bring the sword with which to combat selfish desires and to conquer self. It is not "morals" that should be preached, but the awakening of the inner man to a realization of his own true man-

hood, and the attainment of Divine Knowledge or Wisdom-Religion.

There are three stages by which the spiritual knowledge is attained. The first is known to all men: it consists of the power to intuitively know the good from the bad, the just from the unjust, the pure from the impure, etc. It is called "Conscience", or, more properly, Spiritual Inspiration. The second degree of receptivity consists in the capacity not only to feel, but to understand intellectually, spiritual truths. It is a state known only to those who have attained it, and is called Interior Illumination. The third degree is only attained by few. It consists in an entire opening of the spiritual senses by which spiritual realities become objectively perceptible to the soul of man, and it is called Divine Contemplation. There have, even in the most ancient times and up to the present day, existed men in whom this power of divine contemplation has been developed, and who are therefore in possession of superior knowledge. If we desire to receive information in regard to spiritual things before we have attained the power to perceive them ourselves, we may go to those men for instruction, as their researches and example may be safe guides for the road that leads to the light, for there can be no higher wisdom than a realization of the Divine Truth which perfected the life of Jesus the Initiate.



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# THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: AMERICAN SECTION.

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## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

[Neither the Theosophical Society nor any officer thereof is responsible for the contents of any Paper in this series.]

### **Instinct, Intellect, and Intuition.**

[*A Paper by James M. Pryse, read before Satwa Branch, Los Angeles, Feb. 13, 1891.*]

**T**O the question, "What is the difference between the mind of man and the intelligence exhibited by animals?" it may be said that Occultism recognizes no difference, save that human intellect is clearer in its operation and more distinctly expressed, owing simply and solely to the more perfect molecular structure of the human brain as compared with that of the brute. Between the brilliant intellec<sup>t</sup>ion of a materialistic philosopher, speculating on the mechanical evolution of the universe, and the sagacity of a dog burying a bone in the back-yard as a provision against future hunger, the difference is of degree only and not of kind. The molecules of that philosopher's brain are finer, more perfect than that of the dog—that is all. The dog may die next day and re<sup>inc</sup>arnate in some other animal form so soon that (being now a pup of some superior kind of dog, let us say) he might dig up the bone he concealed in his previous life; the philosopher might die and re<sup>inc</sup>arnate in time to find his own text-books studied by his followers. But the dog will not remember the bone in the back-yard; neither will the philosopher remember the system of world-life he elaborated with such great mental labor. All such recollections belong to the material brain and perish with it; even the impress made upon the psychic body is gone, for the psychic bodies of both dog and philosopher are disintegrated. The Ego-Soul of the philosopher—his real "mind"

as distinguished from his mere intellect—retains no imprint of his useless materialistic philosophy; and the dog has as yet no Ego-Soul. In this, then, lies the true distinction between man and animal.

Beginning with the widest possible generalization, Theosophists speak of the Absolute, the Causeless Cause, of all beings. Rather should we say *Absoluteness*, for we should not qualify our conceptions with even the word "the". It is that aspect of it which is called by Occultists the "Unmanifested Logos," or "Word," which may be called *the Absolute*. The first Manifested Logos is an abstraction to our intellect, for it is neither spirit nor matter—it is One and admits of no duality. From it manifests the Third Logos or "Word," which is, potentially, both spirit and matter divided. The Third Logos is called the *Mind* of the Universe, and from it proceed all beings in all the manifested worlds. Mark well two things that are apparent in this genesis: (1) All things are the differentiation of mind, (2) there is no personal "God" in it, no extra-cosmic "Creator." Absoluteness is not a "God," for it is not a being, but "Be-ness." Its aspect as The Absolute or First Logos is not a personal God. We may call it, as did the old Egyptians, the "God One," for it is the cosmic *Unit*, and therefore *unconscious*, as we understand consciousness, for consciousness to us implies duality: there cannot be a *knower* without there being the *thing known*. And the Third Logos cannot be a God, for it is not one but many: it is the whole vast universe of spirit and matter, embracing "Gods, demons, and mankind." It is divine ideation, cosmic mind, of which all beings are part and portion. It follows—does it not?—that everything in the manifested worlds has within it this cosmic mind, and is therefore living. There is no *dead* thing in the universe; even the stones beneath our feet have life and even intelligence however latent. Why does a man move, talk, see? Because he has life, intelligence. Why does a dog walk, bark? Because he has life, intelligence. Why does a planet, a world, move through space? Because it has life, intelligence. Why does the chemical molecule of one substance combine with certain molecules of certain other substances, and decline the company of that of another? Because it has life, intelligence. All are alike differentiations of Cosmic Mind, and none can be dead or without mind, and life is present in every atom. It sleeps in the mineral, dreams in the plant, begins to awaken in the animal, and comes to full consciousness in man, who may perceive within himself the "Light of the Logos," that "living God" of which he is the temple. "*Ham-sa*," "I am that;" "*So-ham*," "*That is I*," say the Hindû mystics, and in a magnifi-

cent simile they make of Spirit and Matter the "two wings of the Swan of Eternity" floating on the void of Space, and so repeat the mantram, "I repose between the wings of Hamsa-Sohan," "I am that, that is I." For the Third Logos is with them also Mahât, the "great," the Mind of the Universe, and Atmâ, the Universal Self, of which the real Self of every man is a radiation. No cruel notion of a personal God, who can be coaxed and cajoled by prayer, a being who has fashioned the mind as a child makes pies of mud, can approach the infinite grandeur and tenderness of aspiration contained in this Occult conception.

This Mahât is also the Gnostic "Christos" dwarfed now into the Christian "Christ." It is seven-fold in its degrees of differentiation, that is, it consists of seven Hierarchies of spiritual beings, who in their totality are the seven principles of the "Grand Man," or Macrocosm, the "Adam-Kadmon" of the Jewish Kaballists, whom they also identify as "Christ." The mineral has its series of rebirths (or re-incarnations) as man has, so that it is apparent that some of the beings born of Mahât must have had more experience and reached a higher stage of development in preceding Manvantaras than others, for they descend in succession through the seven planes of the mineral. Now physical man is but an instrument to be the temporary habitation of his Ego-Soul, or Manas,—a spiritual entity from the preceding Manvantara, in which it had attained to godlike power and wisdom. This is the true self of man, his real "mind;" it is an actual Spiritual Entity overshadowing the man. But on this lowest physical plane of our earth it is *without experience*, it is senseless in this world. With the man of clay it can communicate only in his dream, in his deepest sleep. Yet every noble influence felt, every spiritual longing or aspiration, the reproof of conscience for every evil deed or thought, comes from this higher mind of man, his Ego-Soul. If they are heeded and cherished and the lower nature purified, this higher mind will begin to impress itself upon the ordinary intellect, giving it flashes of knowledge from planes higher than the physical and astral to which the ordinary mind is confined. These sudden flashes of certain knowledge, arrived at in seeming defiance of ordinary operation of intellect, constitute what is commonly termed "intuition." The almost universal knowledge and vision of the Ego-Soul begins to penetrate into the dark material plane and manifest through the animal brain of material man.

To recapitulate: Whatever exists in all the worlds, all animated nature, and even so-called inanimate or inorganic matter, all spring from universal Cosmic Mind—the Third Logos of Occultists. The "Great Breath" of the Absolute comprises seven Hierarchies

of Creative Spirits or Gods; and the so-called "laws of nature," such as gravitation, chemical affinity, etc., are but the reflections on the material plane of the creative *thought* of these *creative* Gods. Spirit or thought becomes matter, and matter re-becomes spirit. In the lowest stage, that of minerals, the divine essence can manifest only "the laws of matter;" in the plant it begins to develop "apperception," or semi-instinct, such as shown by the sensitive plant; in the animal it becomes "instinct," and in man "intellect;" and these, it will be apparent, differ only in degree and not in kind, for in each the vibratory Breath is functioning in matter. And that is as far as average humanity has yet attained. And it may be said, is passing, that this is equally true of that plane of matter called the psychic, which is matter in a critical or volatile state. Both intellect and psychism belong to the animal nature of man. But his mental and psychic organism have reached a stage where these are sufficiently perfect, when properly attuned, for his divine nature to manifest through them, and this manifestation, infinitely transcending any mere intellectual process, is—intuition. The Higher Ego of man—his real self or individuality—has existed in preceding cosmic incarnations or Manvantaras, and by the general store of countless ages of experience; but in the present cosmic re-incarnation it has not yet fully incarnated so far as average mankind is concerned. The overshadowing of the Ego-Mind constitutes the vast abyss between man and the animals. Ordinary thoughts are not born in the brain, but in the various organs and centers in the body, such as the stomach, the spleen, etc., whence they are reflected to the brain, and by it are formulated. The heart and the brain are the organs through which the higher mind functions. The divine impulses reach the heart first. One can learn to think with the heart as clearly as with the brain. All feelings of tenderness, undefinable aspirations, love of Truth and of an ideal Humanity, lie deep within the heart, and there should we first listen for them. They are the vibratory messages of the God within the Ego-Soul, they are our first "intuitions." They are our first lessons in the secret of Eternal Life; and they came to us at first not as formulated ideas, but as vague longings for spiritual light, love for our fellow-beings, sorrow for the sufferings of mankind, aspirations after Truth. They are signs that the soul of the man, his God-Ego, is at the door of his temple. Therefore do the Eastern mystics call the heart the "City of Brahma." And when he indeed has entered, when the material mind has become his instrument, then is the man omniscient, immortal. The man has become one with the Christos, has joined in the choir of the Gods.

Greatly I value the power of intellect, strong my admiration for brilliancy of mind; yet I know of nothing more useless than these when employed apart from the quest for Truth and love for that humanity which is destined to become divine. The love of a dog for his master is a grander thing in the realm of causes than all the cold intellection of a Haeckel or a Tyndall. It is only by love for that which is *higher than himself* that the soul of even a dog can grow. Soul love is not the instinct of the animal, but is that in him which corresponds to the intuition of man, the prompting of the divine nature existing even in the dumb brute. True, there is not in him the self-conscious divinity which is the higher mind of man; yet the love of the dog is the same cosmic mind seeking expression, and which love cannot die, but will live in the future incarnation of the animal as a vast force moulding for him an individual soul, a self-hood that death cannot dissipate.

There are generalizations and conceptions of life that the prosaic mind shrinks from, not because they are difficult to understand, but actually because of their simplicity. This conception of the absolute universality of life, is it one of the Life, divine life, present in the snowflake, the breeze, the dog, even as it is in man? you ask. If you do not accept the proposition, then I ask in turn: Why does the snowflake fall to earth, why does the breeze blow, whence comes the instinct of the dog, why does the man think, why does he feel within himself vague remorse, whisperings of intuition telling him of divine regions, yearnings for conscious immortality, deep reachings after the one dark Truth which the sight of intellect cannot penetrate, but which to the eye of the soul becomes Light and Life, even the "Light of the Logos," divine Thought, the Creative Breath of the Absolute and Unknowable?

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### The Extension of the Theosophic Movement.

[*A Paper by James M. Pryse, read before the ad interim Convention, Santa Cruz, Cal., Sept. 14, 1890.*]

**P**ROBABLY the starting-point of the majority of persons who join the T. S. is the notion of personal progress, of acquiring faculties and abilities not possessed by the mass of mankind. But this notion is soon found to be selfish and mistaken, and the individuals who fail to discover this soon either drop out of the Society altogether or remain in it only as inefficient and useless members, mere dead weight, like superfluous men in a boat's crew, who neither row nor steer. But others, on realizing that true individual progress leads—not to a separa-

tion from the race—but to a fuller participation in the vast life of humanity, and that all occult powers are conferred upon the individual in trust for the race and never for the mere aggrandizement of the individual, discard this erroneous notion of personal development and direct their energies toward the advancement of the Theosophical Society and the Cause it represents. In this effort the sincere worker soon finds that more than earnestness and energy are requisite, for the reason that no set rules are to be observed, no routine to be followed, no fixed creed or stereotyped dogmas to be promulgated. The advocate of the Cause of Theosophy can render his work efficient only by exercising nice judgment, accurate discrimination; for while his purpose may be definite, the universality of his cause is incompatible with any form of partizanship, and though he may be a bearer of good tidings to others, he cannot be considered in any sense a missionary. He is not seeking to gain converts to Theosophy or to swell the membership of the T. S., but only to disseminate broadcast the seeds of thought for which the T. S. is a temporary storehouse. That these seeds may germinate and come to their appropriate fruitage in the minds of as many men and women as they may find lodgment in, is the sole care of the sower of them. He is not desirous of converting others to his own beliefs, or the beliefs of any particular body of men, but he does desire to share gratuitously with others whatever of truth he may have garnered.

But, unfortunately, this is not the attitude assumed by many theosophists. Bringing with them into the Society their old habits of thought, they take for granted that it has certain doctrines that may be termed theosophical, in the same way that "predestination" and "total depravity" may be called "Presbyterian" doctrines; and further, they assume that these "theosophical" doctrines and beliefs should be the basis of missionary efforts with a view of gaining converts to them. They forget—or have really never learned—that the Theosophical Society, as such, *has no doctrines*, that all men are welcome within its ranks who own allegiance to the one ideal of Universal Brotherhood. Such unwise missionarying and insistence upon the importance of certain or other beliefs retard rather than advance the growth and development of the Society, and even narrow the scope of its work by hindering its attempt to reach as large a number of people as possible with representatives of widely-diversified beliefs, and by repelling and estranging many who would affiliate with it but for the appearance of sectarianism thus cast over it. For it is the erroneous impression of many, both without and within the T. S., that adherence to the belief in Karma, Reincarnation, Adepts, etc., is really

essential to membership in the Society; that members who do not believe these doctrines are somewhat heretical and not wholly Theosophists.

The baselessness of such a position cannot be too frequently and firmly insisted upon. Notions of that sort creeping into the Society are its most dangerous and insidious foes. No matter how true and philosophical the doctrines are, a Society that insisted upon belief in them as necessary qualification for membership could not consistently talk about being a "nucleus of a universal brotherhood." It would become a sect or church—and nothing more. But this assertion, that the doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma are not "Theosophical" doctrines, that is, not enforced dogmas of the T. S., does not hamper the efforts of every sincere believer in Karma and Reincarnation at promulgating them as widely and freely as possible. It is urged by the Masters that we should spread these teachings wherever we can. But we should constantly bear in mind that they are truths to be put forward on their own intrinsic reasonableness, and not as dogmas of any particular Eastern religion or of the T. S. No authority, real or pretended, can add anything to the truth; on the contrary, truths presented as dogmas are less readily accepted because of the sectarian coloring thus given them. The literature of the Society is not in any sense "authoritative;" the only writer in our ranks who could with any reasonableness claim to speak from authority emphatically disclaims it. But this literature (our books, periodicals, etc.,) embodies the best thoughts of our most earnest workers, and repeats much that has been formulated for us by the Masters themselves. It is the product of the united efforts of our members to carry out the three objects of our Society; and it is the evident duty of our fellows to place it before the largest possible number of readers. A vigorous propaganda is essential not only to the growth of the T. S., but even to its continued existence as a body. This propaganda must be carried on by means of a forcible presentation of the teachings so far culled from Oriental literature and religions, together with the fuller explanations given out by the Adepts. The doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation should be especially dwelt upon. But never should any of these teachings be advanced as dogmas of the Society, and the impression should never be given that belief in them is in any way expected of members of the Society. If they are truths, then for that very reason they should be kept undogmatic, unconfined. For the same reasons, members who are the most truly loyal to the T. S. and its declared objects will carefully avoid all tendencies toward the limiting its scope and confining its membership and advocacy

to set beliefs and believers in such set beliefs. Our loyalty to the Society should show itself by the endeavor to preserve its unsectarian character, by following faithfully its three objects, and by so regulating our daily life that no reproach or stigma can ever be justly cast upon the Society or its working members. So long as a majority of the members have this true loyalty, and labor unselfishly for the cause of Humanity, the T. S. will surely prosper, the Theosophical movement will steadily be extended.

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## THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: AMERICAN SECTION.

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## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

[Neither the Theosophical Society nor any officer thereof is responsible for the contents of any Paper in this series.]

### In What Sense Is Universal Brotherhood Possible?

[*A Paper read in San Francisco by Mrs. Mercie M. Thirds.*]

**T**HAT all members of the human family are in some sense knit together by fraternal ties is an idea that is as old as humanity itself. At least it was the dream, if not the conviction, of every race that has left its traces upon our world history. Every great religion has affirmed it. Thinkers in every age have taught it, differing often in their application of the thought, but mutually declaring the essential unity of mankind. Like a great, unfulfilled ideal it still leads the mind and heart of our noblest humanity to strive toward a broader life in which the bars that separate man from his fellows shall melt away, vanishing in the sunshine of a general good will.

But while unity has always remained the social ideal, it cannot be denied that civilization tends as constantly to emphasize differences between man and man. In a savage or semi-barbarous state individuals resemble each other in looks, thought, character and customs much more closely than do the units of a highly-evolved society. The tribe or the clan is the real individual, its members acting merely as parts of the communal body whose duty it is to serve the whole rather than to develop themselves.

Later we find the unit is a family, but when civilization has reached its height separation is complete, individual man for the first time attaining independence as a unit. Resemblance has now yielded to diversity. Personal idiosyncrasies become marked. Tastes and aptitudes develop an infinite variety, producing men of all grades, social, moral, and intellectual. Extremes of wealth

and poverty, virtue and vice, intelligence and ignorance for the first time become possible in one community, personal freedom involving personal choice with its attendant consequences. That intellectual activity which has called into being all these various manifestations of human life is itself stimulated by the play of these forces upon each other, constantly accelerating the speed with which civilization reaches its climax of development.

That social evolution proceeds in this manner can hardly be questioned; nor can it be denied that the growth of individuality keeps pace with civilization. Noting this fact our modern cry became: Great alone is the individual! Let each build up himself, for his fate is his alone and his duty is to himself!

Universal brotherhood has no place in such a creed and, following this line of reasoning, certainly seems to be no better than an idle dream. But, strangely enough, this dream has gained strength with that very growth of individuality which seems to contradict its essential spirit. If one is the accompaniment of civilization, so is the other. Though they seem far apart as the poles, that life experience which justifies one, as surely commends the other. Individual thinkers may wrangle over their respective claims as guiding principles in practical life, but we would ask how they may be harmonized as mutually useful factors in human progress. If civilization separates men from each other, in what sense is universal brotherhood possible?

Theosophy, we claim, is able to harmonize all facts by showing their relation to the whole. Truth cannot contradict itself, though it may appear to do so when we are not acquainted with the basis underlying its various manifestations. Nature cannot be expressed by any formula less comprehensive than a cosmos. When we say Lo! this is the way, she confronts us with another road. We argue when our paths diverge, parting with angry reproaches from those who choose a contrary way, only to meet on the farther side of a mountain that blocked our passage. Light and darkness, strength and weakness, virtue and vice are all a part of that bewildering complexity we call Nature.

In a study of the laws which govern progress it is usual to insist that man shall continue along those lines on which it can be demonstrated that best results have been achieved in the past. In other words, it is claimed that progress is made in a straight line forward. But—is it? What say the mouldered civilizations of a glorious past? What answer may we read in the degraded remnants of once powerful and enlightened nations? What says the life of man which blossoms like a flower on earth to quickly pass away?

Nature does not work on straight lines, neither is she always trying to accomplish the same object. Now it is a pebble that she moulds from matter, drawing together those molecules which answer her purpose, shattering the solid rock with an invisible anvil, then rounding and polishing its surface by the patient process of her waves. Again she is busied with a plant. Her marvellous chemistry draws from sky and earth materials that she cunningly interweaves to deck a globe with verdure. But, infinite as is her power here, does she continue forever on this line? No, she forms a bird to wing its way through her forests, and peoples her ocean with creatures of different mould. From her bosom springs animal life, and, again, she fashions man.

I do not mean by this to imply that there is any want of continuity in natural processes, or that no relation exists between these changing manifestations. On the contrary, they give evidence of a gradual unfoldment of some stupendous plan. I would only point out that this progress is something more than the perfecting of one idea. Truly, the goal is one, but it is not merely a single thread that is to reach it; it is the entire mass. In and out, back and forth the shuttle wanders, weaving the garment of God. In and out, back and forth his children wander, following the thread back to that creative hand.

Unity in diversity is Mother Nature herself. But wherein shall we find that unity? How comprehend that diversity? Theosophy teaches that all things, spiritual and material, have sprung from that Great Cause which it reverently forbears to name, because uncomprehended, referring to it usually as the Absolute. Creation is assigned to those celestial hierarchies proceeding from it like rays from the sun, and is carried through seven planes or seven differentiations of primeval substance. The higher, or so-called spiritual planes, are homogeneous, formless, and forever perfect, an ocean of conscious, intelligent life. To this universal life, as beams to the sun, or sparks to a flame, belong the spirit and soul of all created beings, who are therefore not merely similar or equal on these planes, but actually identical, one undivided essence.

From this universal life and mind proceeds the world of forms, creation on the lower planes. By the power of thought it springs into objectivity, each thing existing as an idea in the mind of its creator before it is clothed with matter, or realized to sensuous perception. In a precisely similar manner man constructs his creations according to a plan already existing in his thought. Every idea has therefore a subjective form which tends to solidify or to manifest itself on the objective, material plane. Without this preexisting idea it is inconceivable that any creation could be

accomplished, while all its myriad varieties may be traced to the infinite productiveness of mind. Hence, we have found in thought the basis of all diversity, as well as the cause of creation. Can we then assume that uniformity of thought is desirable?

Is it not more reasonable to suppose that through diversity Nature is working out her plan, whatever that may be? If from unity she has produced variety, either creation is meaningless or she is slowly evolving a plan. She seems to work in cycles. Taking a savage race, she leads them onward through centuries of experience to a civilized state. Whatever may be the defects of this state—and they are many—certain results have been accomplished. These are always the cultivation of separate, or individual, life, with the fullest possible illustration of man's capacity for good and evil. In short, man, as a unit, has tested his strength and learned his limitations. He has learned, to some extent, the lesson of living. The fruit of civilization is this development of individuality, accompanied by a perception of its proper bounds. Man's knowledge and power have grown with its growth, man's sinfulness has grown with its aggression. How plainly, then, we seem to see Nature's wise intent! While building up the unit she will teach its relation to the whole. The spark that flashed from spiritual realms to thread the mazes of terrestrial life shall return, still a portion of the flame but endowed with individuality. Another lamp shall be lighted from that quenchless sun which knows no changing but whose law is multiplication.

Man learns his lesson slowly because it is not merely a perception of truth which is required, but an adaptation of the whole being to that law. As no single life is sufficient to transform a savage into a philosopher, so no single civilization is able to perfect Nature's design. There are probably always a few who have thoroughly assimilated the moral and intellectual culture of a great epoch, but to most of us it has brought only partial unfoldment. Still, a harvest has been gathered; fruit has been evolved. When it is accomplished decline sets in as inevitably as fields grow brown when ripened grain is gathered. No nation has ever yet carried progress beyond this point; that is to say, no nation, after developing its highest human types, has ever been able to continue them, much less to use their powers for further aggrandizement along any line. As in the man, so in the nation, maturity cannot perpetuate itself, but must yield to decay and death.

This loss, however, is only apparent, for each civilization serves as a seed for one to follow, in which other individuals will learn the same lessons, or, it may be, perfect a growth already well begun. Objective life cannot cease while the causes which produce

it remain in operation, and those causes, which we have found in active ideation, can only cease when perfect knowledge leaves to thought no further quest in matter.

Viewing life in this way one no longer expects to find a basis of harmony in human thought. Any effort to mould opinion into uniformity must fail so long as individuals represent varied degrees of intellectual development, and it is hardly conceivable that they should ever cease to do so. We are like mirrors held up to Truth, distorting her image or giving back a more or less faithful reflection according to our own purity, by which is meant freedom from sense deception. This is chiefly a result of experience, and its lack can only with justice be considered a fault when the individual has wilfully debased his higher faculties. Our imperfect perception of truth is not error: it is relative truth. Absolute truth we can grasp only when all the clouds of passion and prejudice are cleared away from our minds, leaving them as perfect mirrors to reflect its every feature and expression.

That this is so should not be regarded as inevitable evil. If we could imagine all minds developing along the same lines, thinking the same thoughts, approving the same methods, growing into the same pattern, we would doubtless have pictured a world free from antagonism, but in that world individuality could have no place. We would be as alike as two peas in a pod or acorns on a tree; separated from each other in body only and for no conceivable purpose. Individuality is self-consciousness, and implies difference on the planes of consciousness, not merely physical separation. Nature is building it up with infinite labor, not to reduce wheat, corn, and barley to a common factor, but to evolve, from that spiritual soil which is their common factor, wheat, corn, and barley.

If man were simply an intellectual being, antagonism would be inevitable, and universal brotherhood, in any practical sense, could only be a conception of stupidity. Progress would forever increase those differences which are emphasized by civilization, for the law that "To him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath," certainly holds good in the attainment of knowledge.

But great as is intellect, there is something still higher. We call it the spiritual nature. Like the sun which warms and vivifies a field, producing with earth's help a golden harvest yet remaining itself forever unchanged, so our higher natures, rays of the spiritual sun, warm and vivify these lower planes upon which nature is growing a harvest of individualities. What in us is most godlike belongs to that upper realm. It sees good in all things, because each humblest part is necessary to the whole and,

consciously or unconsciously, must be helping to work out a design. Looking down upon our struggling growth it sees not imperfection but coming fruitage. There is no word that so fitly expresses this divine faculty as sympathy. It culls the noblest from man's intellectual nature to keep it in the heart, leading it backward with all its garnered powers to that unity from which it came, and in which only it can drink the waters of immortality. Sympathy is that holy love called God when man would give some definition of Deity. Above, it is the sun in which all rays are merged; below, it is the soil from which all roots are nourished. Father and mother of all existences, all things are its children, knit into a universal brotherhood from which nothing can escape if it would. There is forever one unity. Not one atom can be degraded without, in so far, debasing the whole. Not one atom can be helped onward in its work of evolution without, in so far, lifting the entire mass. To help another is to help ourselves, for every cloud on earth is a bar to our own enlightenment, overcoming which the sun streams more brightly upon all.

In such a unity we lose no portion of our hard-won individuality. We work with all, for all, knowing that our helpfulness speeds our own growth instead of hindering it. Unlike in thought, but one in sympathy, we are developing both sides of our nature at the same time. Stimulating mind by the warmth of sympathy, we carry back to sympathy the light of reason. Heart and head work together for nature's dual purpose. Progress will not force us to separate them from each other. Returning to higher realms we do not leave behind us that intellectual nature we have gained, but only lift it to a higher level. The spark returns to its primeval fire knowing itself. Each drop of countless myriads flung by creative power from the ocean of universal life returns with some color of its own, some essence of identity. But to that ocean it must some day return. Bearing with it that essence, the fruit of its pilgrimage, when perfected,

“The dewdrop slips into the shining sea.”



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# THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: AMERICAN SECTION.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE, P. O. Box 2659.

NEW YORK, July, 1891.

## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

[Neither the Theosophical Society nor any officer thereof is responsible for the contents of any Paper in this series.]

### Intuition.

*[Read at a meeting of the Aryan T. S. by a member thereof.]*

**A**FTER the long, able, and exhaustive address on Intuition which it was our privilege to listen to last Tuesday, there is little left for succeeding speakers to do on the subject which is still before the meeting, except to gather up here and there some of the fragments that remain that nothing be lost. Let a little of this work be my task this evening, and let me ask you to accompany me in a discursive ramble over the field, while we pick up now and again a stray ear or two of golden grain which the reaper has failed to garner in his admirable essay, or has kindly let fall as he passed along for the encouragement of the gleaners who should come after.

And first as to the meaning, the ordinary everyday meaning, of the word "intuition." Turning to that useful book of reference and information, Webster's Dictionary—a volume, by the way, of which in passing it may be truly said that we do not read and study it half as much as we might with profit both to ourselves and others—turning to Webster, I find that "intuition" is derived from the Latin verb *intueri*, one of the forms of which is *intuitus*, and from this by the simple process of changing its last syllable we get *intuition*. Now *intueri* means "to look upon," "to look closely at," "to gaze at." This is the root or original idea, and according to this, "intuition" is primarily and essentially "a looking at or gazing upon something." But the root ideas of words become with the lapse of time modified, limited, extended, and

even wholly perverted. Many curious examples of this might be cited, but one or two will suffice by way of illustration. Thus in the older dictionaries you will find the word "restive" explained as "quiet, calm, peaceful, full of rest." But the people, the makers of books and newspapers, paid no attention to this definition and insisted upon using the word as synonymous with restless, fidgety, impatient, the very opposite of its root idea; and the lexicographers have had to surrender, as the later editions of the dictionaries bear witness. But perhaps the most striking illustration of change or limitation of the original meaning of a word which occurs to me is to be found in an old collect or prayer in the Episcopal liturgy, which begins in this extraordinary fashion: "Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings"—a petition which might indeed be applicable to the needs of one of those Hindû yogis who have arrived at that stage of development known as "renunciation of action", but has neither sense nor meaning when translated into modern English. Going back, however, to the root idea of the word "prevent", the absurdity is at once removed; for "prevent" comes from two words meaning simply "to go before"; and while one can go before another to stop or hinder him, he can also do so to guide or protect; and it is, of course, in this latter and now obsolete sense of the word that "prevent" is used in the collect referred to.

But to return to "intuition." The word is not used in the broad general sense of gazing or looking at an object, but in a special and very limited sense. It is confined, in fact, exclusively to those sudden, momentary ideas or glimpses of things which flash through the brain, and come and go as they please, subject to no control, amenable to no known recognized law, whereby without labor, without reasoning, and often without thought, we see the true inwardness of things and arrive instantaneously at conclusions and results which have defied and were apparently beyond the ordinary senses and faculties of mind and body. "Intuition," says Webster, "is direct apprehension or recognition as distinguished from mediate knowledge"—or knowledge which we attain through the medium of our ordinary senses. "What we know or comprehend," says Taylor, "as soon as we perceive or attend to it, we are said to know by intuition;" and Wordsworth speaks of

"One in whom persuasion or belief  
Had ripened into faith, and faith become  
A passionate intuition."

Dr. Keightley has already pointed out the difference between "intuition" and "instinct;" but we must also avoid confusing the

former with acquired habit. Whatever we do frequently we learn to do well and quickly. Experience, often repeated, tends to rapidity of action. Having performed any task over and over again, we lose no time in doubt or hesitation when next the same work presents itself. The mind has become alert; the knotty point which a few years ago would have greatly perplexed us is instantly solved. Before a story is half told or an argument half finished, we have leaped to its *denouement*—and the subsequent proceedings interest us no more. All this is familiar ground. Every business man is doing it every day of his life. But this quickness, this mental alertness, this prompt intellectual perception, is not intuition. Over and above, or rather beyond, all this, whether from within or from without, there come moments of inspiration, if we may so call them, when a fragment of higher knowledge, a ray of light from some hidden source flashes through the brain, and we know and realize instantly what we had been in vain trying with all our trained faculties to discover. These fleeting moments are the glimpses of intuition which, like angels' visits, are few and far between in the experience of most of us. Yet we have all at some time or other experienced them, and can recall similar visits in the experience of our friends. Very curious and erratic, too, are the ways and times in which these comets of the microcosm make their appearance. A friend of mine, an expert in mathematics, is fond of telling the story of one of these occasions which happened to himself in his youthful days. He was spending his evenings at the village schoolmaster's studying algebra, and had been for a whole fortnight fruitlessly puzzling his brain over a problem which his teacher insisted he could solve for himself if he would only try hard enough. In front of the teacher's house was a wide gateway with two unusually large posts. On this particular evening, which happened to be a very dark one, as he left the house with head somewhat bowed and brain wholly intent upon the unsolved problem, he struck with force one of the gate posts, hitting it square with his forehead. Instantly, he says, and simultaneously with the blow, the solution of the problem flashed upon him. It was clearly a case of intuition; but I don't wish to be understood as recommending this particular method of solving algebraical problems to any aspiring student who may chance to be present.

Then you have all, doubtless, heard the story of the old Greek philosopher and the golden crown. King Hiero had given a goldsmith a certain weight of gold to be made into a crown for the royal head. The crown was duly finished and returned, and was of exactly the same weight as the gold which had been given out.

But the King had his doubts of the honesty of the Court jeweller, and suspected him of keeping back part of the gold and replacing it with baser metal; and the task of finding out the weight of genuine gold in the crown, without injury to the latter, was given to Archimedes. Long and in vain, however, did the mathematician wrestle with the problem. But one day in taking his bath Archimedes chanced to notice the gradual rising of the water in the vessel as he immersed his body in it. At once the problem over which he had been brooding was mentally solved, the key to the solution was discovered, and in his excitement and self-absorption Archimedes rushed from the bathroom, exclaiming: "Eureka! Eureka! I have found it! I have found it!" Clearly this, too, was a fragment of intuition.

How often, also, does some inventor tax his brain and strain all his mental powers to no purpose over some refractory piece of mechanism. The thing should go but wont. Cranks and cog-wheels and levers and pinions and eccentrics and cut-offs and the whole catalogue of mechanical devices are thoroughly studied, but without effect. The machine is carefully overhauled in all its parts, even the minutest, with all the skill and care that long experience can furnish or suggest; yet there is no practical result. The poor inventor is about to abandon it in despair; his efforts relax and his overtired brain has a brief respite, when, lo! instantly the light breaks in; a new idea has struck him, and the missing link, which crowns his labors with success, is duly found. Surely this, too, is another case of intuition.

There is no need to cite further illustrations. Speaking generally and without any wish to dogmatize where I know so little, it seems to me that the persons who are more frequently than others the subjects of intuition are artists, musicians, poets, and inventors. And I should be inclined to place their relative importance in the above order. The painter has to deal with ideas and to express them in color and form. The musician translates ideas into harmonious sounds, and the poet into language; while the inventor, working on a lower plane, is confined to purely material speculations and combinations.

The question now naturally arises—Whence come these flashes of intuition? Are they from within or from without? Are they wanderers from the Great Unknown, paying us a flying visit as they pass into the vast Beyond; or do they take their origin in ourselves, and are in their nature and development an essential part of the wondrous microcosm which we call man? Bearing in mind the septenary constitution of man and the law of analogy and correspondence which runs, according to theosophic teaching,

through the manifested worlds, we may be able to throw some light, however feeble, upon these and kindred interrogatories.

First, then, remembering that the root meaning of intuition is to look upon or gaze at, it is obvious that the eye may be called the special organ of intuition, although, strictly speaking, intuition may come through any of the senses. Now the physical eye is only the organ of vision on the purely material plane. But what about the other planes of the microcosm? If the axiom "As above, so below" is accepted, if the law of analogy has a real existence, as we claim, then man has an eye, or an organ corresponding in its nature and functions to the physical eye, for sensing objects on each plane of his being. The astral body must have its eye for use on the astral plane; the soul can surely see in its own realm; while the spiritual or "Divine eye," as Krishna calls it in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, endows the eye with vision on the highest arûpic planes. Now ordinarily, while in this lower tabernacle, we are so material and worldly that the brain, the organ of physical consciousness, is unable to receive impressions from all these inner and finer faculties. Or, to express the same point in another and perhaps more accurate form, we live so entirely on the physical plane, and are so wholly wrapped up in material things, that our consciousness never extends beyond them. We talk of the astral or psychic or spiritual, but it is only talk. We don't live on these other planes; we don't consciously even make incursions into these unknown territories of ours; and the result inevitably follows that the parts of the physical brain through which these inner senses have relation to the physical man and his every day personality are atrophied or undeveloped. We don't use them, and they waste away, precisely as other muscles and organs of the body do. We fail to call them into active exercise, and they remain undeveloped. But these organs are not dead, they are only sleeping. They have become temporarily inoperative, yet their potentiality still exists.

The stars have not been blotted out because we fail to see them at noonday. They are still shining, only their feeble light is obscured by the greater effulgence of the sun. Down at the bottom of a deep shaft, or during a total eclipse of the sun, the stars can be seen even in the daytime. So with the feebler powers and faculties in man. They are usually overshadowed by the stronger materialism of the lower personality; yet under certain conditions, when the predominating influence of the body is temporarily subdued or suspended, these instruments of the higher principles exhibit sparks of life, spasms, as it were, of activity, during which the knowledge of the subjective planes is cognized

by the everyday brain and consciousness. How and when such moments come to any particular individual will depend upon the individual himself; but usually they occur at exceptional periods of quiet repose, when the surroundings are all peaceful and harmonious, and the senses are verging upon the critical line which separates the waking from the sleeping state.

Archimedes found his opportunity in the soothing comfort of the bathroom. Some are overtaken as they meditate in the cool of the day. With others intuition waits upon reverie. Others again find the early morning hours the most-favorable, while some only catch glimpses of the unknown after night has wrapped everything around them in darkness and slumber. The sages of all times have ever found their inspiration increased by living afar from men in the solitary places of the earth. But each of us who would strive after these golden moments must study his own peculiarities, and endeavor to bring about those conditions in himself and in his environment which tend to lift him to higher planes.

Intuition has been defined to be "spiritual consciousness." I am not quite sure that either of these words is strictly correct. Consciousness seems to me too broad and comprehensive a term. For consciousness is the aggregate result of all the senses, while intuition is a phase of consciousness acquired by only a single sense; and I should be inclined, therefore, to define intuition as *perception* rather than consciousness. Again, the word "spiritual" must be interpreted with a good deal of latitude if we would not confine intuition within exceedingly narrow limits. It is true that spiritual perception is the highest kind of intuition, but it seems also clear that perception on any plane above the physical and mental might properly be called intuitive. And it may well be doubted, too, whether in our present stage of evolution we ever get any direct illumination from sources higher than the soul plane.

And now, gathering together the odds and ends of our gleanings, let us see what kind of a sheaf they amount to. We have glanced at the ordinary meaning and the root meaning of the word itself; we have noticed the curious times and ways in which intuition manifests itself; we have tried to trace these manifestations to the inner and higher powers of the microcosm acting temporarily upon the physical brain on special occasions in a special way and under exceptionally favorable conditions; and we have endeavored to explain why these occasions are so infrequent.

If it be asked, How can we develop these special organs of the brain and make intuition the rule and not the exception, I can only reply in a general way, in addition to what has already been said on this point, by a quotation or two from *The Voice of the Silence*:

"No light that shines from spirit can dispel the darkness of the nether soul unless all selfish thought has fled therefrom, and that the pilgrim saith: 'I have renounced this passing frame; I have destroyed the cause: the shadows cast can as effects no longer be.'

"Tell him, O Candidate, that he who makes of pride and self-regard bond-maidens to devotion; that he who, cleaving to existence, still lays his patience and submission to the Law as a sweet flower at the feet of Buddha, becomes a Srotapatti in this birth. The Siddhis (or Powers) of perfection may loom far, far away; but the first step is taken, the stream is entered, and he may gain the eye-sight of the mountain eagle, the hearing of the timid doe.

"Tell him, O Aspirant, that true devotion may bring him back that knowledge which was his in former births. The deva (or divine) sight and deva hearing are not obtained in one short birth."

"The pupil must regain the child state he has lost ere the first sound can fall upon his ear.

"The light from the One Master, the one unfading golden light of Spirit, shoots its effulgent beams on the disciple from the very first. Its rays thread through the thick dark clouds of matter.

"Now here, now there, these rays illumine it, like sun-sparks light the earth through the thick foliage of the jungle growth. But, O Disciple, unless the flesh is passive, head cool, the soul as firm and pure as flaming diamond, the radiance will not reach the chamber, its sunlight will not warm the heart, nor will the mystic sounds of the Akásic heights reach the ear, however eager, at the initial stage."

### Intuitional Problems.

[By a Member-at-Large, read at a meeting of the Aryan T. S.]

THE study of Intuition is attended with many difficulties, not the least being the contradictions found in those utterances which purport to proceed from this inner source of knowledge and enlightenment. All mystics, from Iamblichus to the authors of *The Perfect Way*, have extolled Intuition; but no two among them have agreed in their deliverances. The most recent illustration of these habitual divergences may be found in the life of the late Laurence Oliphant, whose remarkable career has just been related in a *Memoir* of him and his almost equally remarkable wife, Alice Oliphant. These two joined themselves to a little community established at Brocton, Pennsylvania, by Thomas Lake Harris. The latter was a mystic who declared himself to have attained direct communication with the Godhead.

He believed that he and those who followed his directions would and did arrive at such a condition of illumination that their minds reflected the divine will and purpose with absolute fidelity. They held that by severe physical discipline and absolute self-surrender it was possible to live a Christ-like life; and the members of the community suppressed their own volition, yielded the most abject obedience to their head, and in fact came perilously near erecting him into an object of worship. Now Laurence Oliphant insisted that he was led to join the Harris community by the light of intuition; and this belief he continued to hold for several years, and until certain discoveries made by the inferior faculty of Reason forced him to perceive that he had been deluded, and compelled the abandonment of that scheme of life.

Still Oliphant's faith in the trustworthiness of intuition remained unshaken, and he and his wife proceeded to develop a new system of mysticism, which they put in practice on the coast of Palestine, and which they endeavored to explain in two books that unfortunately stand in need of elucidation. Neither *Sympneumata* nor *Scientific Religion* is in accord with any other mystical system, and both have apparently been hitherto beyond the average comprehension. With one modern deliverance only does the life-theory of the Oliphants seem to have any analogy, and that is the doctrine of *The Perfect Way*, but even there the accord is confined to agreement upon the spiritual function and mission of woman. It is to be noted, moreover, that Laurence Oliphant had examined and rejected modern Theosophy as represented by this Society. It may be of interest to quote from a letter in which he states his opinion of the whole matter. He says:

"When the Theosophical Society was first founded by Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott, both of whom I knew, and others, I was asked to become a member of it; but I had reasons at the time, which I have since found to be sound, which prevented me from identifying myself with it in any way. I believe the whole thing to be a delusion and a snare. Mr. Sinnett himself, in the tenth page of his book (*Esoteric Buddhism*), describes why it is so. What he says of the 'cultivated devotees' of India is true of the Thibet Brothers as well. The founders of the system, long before Christ, built up 'a conception of nature, the universe, and God entirely on a metaphysical basis, and have evolved their systems by sheer force of transcendental thinking'. Passing into the other world, they retained these delusions, with which they continued to impregnate their disciples in this. As time went on the Spiritual Society increased, forming a sort of heaven or Devachan, and in a higher degree a Nirvana of their own,—conditions which have no

real existence except in the brains of those who retain in after-life the absorbed and contemplative mental attitude they acquired in this, and which they call subjective. Though how, if, as they do, one admits that everything in nature is material, you can separate objectivity from subjectivity, is difficult to imagine. Practically the cultivation of what they call the 'sixth sense' means losing the control of the other five. Thus a preliminary for entering into the mysteries is that the neophyte goes into trance conditions. In other words, his five senses are magnetized, and he becomes the sport of any delusions in this condition which may be projected upon his hypnotized consciousness by the invisibles; and, as these form a compact society, the images which are produced and the impressions which are conveyed are similar in character; just as a bigoted Swedenborgian in a trance condition would be certain to have all his religious impressions confirmed by an intromission into scenes such as those described by Swedenborg. I have been for seventeen years in intimate association with those who sought to derive knowledge from such sources, and have some personal experience of my own in the matter, and have come to the conclusion that nothing is reliable which is received while the organism is in an abnormal condition. Although Mr. Sinnett gives an explanation of spiritual mediumship which is right in some respects, and plausible where it is wrong, the Mahâtmâs and Rishis are nothing more or less than mediums; and where they mistake is, in thinking that the beings in the other world are unconscious of what happens to people in this, while in fact they are constantly engaged in consciously projecting their influence upon them, either for good or for bad. While Buddhist occultism is infinitely higher than any form of Spiritualism, or rather Spiritism, that is known, it is nothing more than the highest development of it; but in order to avoid this imputation, it pretends to describe the phenomena of modern Spiritism, not touching, however, those phases of it which Mr. Sinnett's explanations would altogether fail to account for. The radical vice of the system, however, is, that by concentrating universal effort on subjectivity, it is utterly useless as a moral agent in this world. A religion which says that because our objective existence is as 1 to 80 to our subjective existence, therefore all man's moral and physical needs here are unworthy of notice, is itself to my mind unworthy of notice. The foundation of it is egotism, the teaching the Nirvanic condition."

It would be a mere waste of time to analyze this statement, for it is perfectly obvious that it is a caricature, and not a description, of Theosophical beliefs and positions. It might be asserted with little or no exaggeration that there is scarcely a correct sentence

in it from beginning to end. It is manifestly the utterance of crass ignorance concerning the whole subject. Yet it is to be observed that Laurence Oliphant was, as he believed, judging Theosophy by the light of seventeen years of experience in cultivation through intuition, to the teachings of which he refers as incompatible with acceptance of the Eastern doctrines. At a later period he however gave a still more curious example of the inconsistency—almost the incoherency—of his views. He never would admit that he was a Spiritualist. He persisted, as has been seen, in denying that trustworthy information could be attained while the organism was in an abnormal condition. Yet the whole of *Sympneumata* was written by inspiration, the wife dictating, the husband writing, according to the preface and also according to the *Memoir*. *Scientific Religion*, moreover, was avowedly the part-product of spiritual inspiration, Alice Oliphant, then no longer in the flesh, being credited with a full share in the work. Not only this, but Laurence Oliphant, as his biographer relates, used to be regularly "controlled" by the spirit of his dead wife, at such times exhibiting all the physical manifestations familiar to those who have made a study of mediumship. It would seem, therefore, that in this case the firmest faith in intuition did not protect the subject from the strangest errors and illusions; and that he walked with his eyes open into dangers which he declared to be too apparent to one of his wide experience.

This case of Laurence Oliphant is perhaps an extreme one; yet it certainly is not the case of a blundering individual who rashly steps where angels fear to tread. No man could have given more thorough preparation to his work. The self-discipline to which he submitted should have carried him far on the Path, had he been a chela. There does not appear to have been one egoistic feeling in his nature when the work was accomplished. But his faith and his loyalty were alike impotent to protect him from the wrongs inflicted by a false "guru", and his sincerity and devotion, after he had surmounted that shock, could not save him from self-deception of the most transparent character. His quest was a noble one, and it was followed with knightly zeal and perseverance. In such a case, it might be thought, intuition should have guided a pure-minded, unselfish truth-seeker to better purpose; should at least have prevented him from falling into errors and illusions such as the unassisted reason is commonly able to avoid. But the problems connected with this subject are difficult, nor do contemplation and reflection tend to facilitate their solution.

Let us consider for a moment a definition of Intuition. We are told in that beautiful and profound book, *The Perfect Way*,

that "Intuition is that mode of the mind whereby, after exercising itself in an outward direction as Intellect, in order to obtain cognition of phenomena, it returns towards its center as Intuition, and, by ascertaining the essential idea of the fact apprehended through the senses, completes the process of its thought"; and again, "The Intuition is that operation of the mind whereby we are enabled to gain access to the interior and permanent region of our nature, and there to possess ourselves of the knowledge which in the long ages of her past existences the Soul has made her own". Now if indeed intuition be this, it would seem that there should be some sure and certain method of distinguishing between that which is intuition and that which is not; for it seems difficult to escape the conclusion that nearly all, if not all, mystics in the past have more or less been deceived by false lights when supposing themselves under the full illumination of the central sun. No otherwise is it apparently possible to account for the innumerable discrepancies in the doctrines of all these seekers after truth, all these Illuminati, who, trusting to the same source of knowledge, have produced such irreconcilable solutions of the problems concerned. It is by intuition alone, we are told again and again, that the higher truths can be approached and attained. But alas! how is it that even the best minds fail to agree upon the answers received from this oracle?

The modern Psychology, perhaps driven to this course by the difficulties of the situation, refuses to recognize intuition at all, calls it an obsolete superstition, and relegates it to the limbo of exploded traditions. The Theosophical Society, it is true, has little in common with the new Psychology, for the latter is apparently bent on demonstrating that psychology may exist without a Psyche. By retaining the terminology of Dualism and applying it to the theories of Monism, this remarkable result is sought; though so far with distressingly inadequate results. Those, however, who continue to believe that the human soul is a reality and not a mere functioning of certain physical organs, should take into serious consideration the responsibilities which rest upon the defenders of the spiritual theory of the universe, and should recognize the necessity of clearing away those difficulties which beset the subject here treated. It will have to be admitted that up to the present time Intuition has not yielded the results confidently anticipated. It may quite possibly be due to inherited tendencies in the mystics who have been the mediums of intuitionist teachings, that those teachings have been so conflicting. It may possibly be that on the present plane there is no remedy for such confusing phenomena. But the fact remains that the ideas advanced

by mystical intuition possess no better guarantees for their veracity than do the ordinary ideas of those who rely only upon Reason—that is, if we may judge from the divergence and discord which run riot among them.

To contend that intuition can be an infallible guide or a perfectly trustworthy instructor, so long as the question—whose intuition?—remains a necessary preliminary to any such consideration, is surely impossible. For if intuition has no standard or criterion, we are no better off than in trusting to reason, when we go to her for counsel and help. And, as the case of Laurence Oliphant plainly shows, there is great and constant danger to the truth-seeker in maintaining an ambiguous attitude on this crucial question. Whoever insists on the principle that intuition is alone trustworthy as a spiritual guide and judge, stands committed to the advocacy of that line of conduct which, both in the past and in the present, has resulted mainly in waste of energy and confusion of beliefs. The Theosophical Society has at its hand here a perfectly congenial and unquestionably important subject, though one which bristles with difficulties. Discussion and reflection may throw some light upon the matter, and should therefore be essayed. As the case stands, however, it seems an unavoidable conclusion that if we cannot do without intuition, neither can we derive much benefit from the employment of the faculty unless safeguards against error and illusion, hitherto not available, can be devised and applied. For Pilate's question, after eighteen hundred years, is still unanswered.



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# THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: AMERICAN SECTION.

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## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

[Neither the Theosophical Society nor any officer thereof is responsible for the contents of any Paper in this series.]

### Mystical California.

[Read before the Brooklyn and the Aryan T. S. by John M. Pryse.]

**P**O doubt many listeners, after hearing this paper and knowing that I lived but several years in the flower-garden of the world, will be inclined to smile audibly, as did several British aristocrats who were once engaged in a heated conversation about India with the eccentric George Francis Train. To bring the discussion to a climax our beloved "Psycho" exclaimed in a loud voice: "My dear sirs, you can't tell me anything concerning this matter, for I know *all about* India—her history, customs, temples, rulers, and languages—for I once spent *two weeks* in Bombay!" At any rate, everyone is invited to make due allowance for exaggeration in this paper.

We will first state the situation and afterwards offer explanation.

All Theosophists who have noticed the rapid spread of Theosophic ideas in California, and with no apparent effort or propaganda until recently, have wondered at the cause. In that single State are over one-fourth of all the Branches in the New World. But not only is this so in regard to Theosophy, but *all* advanced ideas find there a ready welcome. Thus when *Robert Elsmere* came out, Elsmere clubs sprang into existence, and when *Looking Backward* reached the Coast the sale was simply enormous. Soon even the smaller towns rejoiced in Nationalist clubs, where those moved by inward inspiration and stimulant could rise and find solace in haranguing others.

Thither have gone the Butlerites—the subscription list of the Boston *Esoteric* pointing the way, preaching of Rocky Mountain Adepts, and have gathered a large following. Thomas Lake

Harris, making good the prophecy of Christ's return, and Sidârtha, an amalgamated reïncarnation of Gautama Buddha and Jesus, live on the fat of the land. Christian Scientists, at one with God and devoid of the principle of evil, will (for a stipulated sum) tackle anything from a sore thumb to the last stages of consumption, though fighting shy of the jumping tooth-ache. The Mental Scientists of different stripes, though all possessing the great panacea, find there a lucrative trade. Clairvoyant signs swing to the breeze on every street; and as a Californian lately said to me, "We don't consider anyone a true citizen of San Francisco unless he gets his fortune told once a week." You can find bigger horoscopes than telescopes in California. Needless to say, the dailies are burdened with advertisements that would have brought such mystics to the stake, had they made these declarations in what are called the "good old Puritan days".

Unlike other sections of the United States, our Spiritualistic friends are making headway on this Coast that is fanned by delightful air from the Japan stream. And their mediums are enabled to give other than sleight-of-hand tests, too, for the edification of the faithful and the dumbounding of skeptics. Some of their foremost mediums have informed me that they can get manifestations more easily there than elsewhere, the climatic and other conditions being specially favorable.

The Californians are certainly open-minded and open-hearted, and will show you a display of either fruits or flowers, climate, gorgeous scenery, or saleable corner-lots that the outside world cannot duplicate. Even as regards corner-lots they obey a high-minded Scriptural injunction, for there thousands of "tenderfeet" who can thus address these real-estate fiends: "I was a stranger, and ye took me in".

An Englishman from Australia has just expressed his surprise to the Associated Press as to the difference between that isle and our rock-bound Coast on the west. In Australian cities Sunday is rigidly enforced, and nothing going by the name of "desecration" is for a moment to be put up with. Everyone assumes a staid air, even the street-cars run slowly, and over all hangs the hush of the Puritan Sabbath. But on that reckless Coast Sunday is a gala day; all places of amusement and refreshment are in full blast, and all the inhabitants combine to make it truly a day of recreation. He says he saw, nevertheless, more drunkenness in Australia, even on Sundays, than in San Francisco, the friskiest city of all.

Such things go to show that California is comparatively free from the orthodox chains that bind her eastern sisters. Not only are her people more mentally free, but they are to a certain de-

gree *psychically* unfettered, as anyone with trained will can easily prove, when on the street, by causing so many to look back upon sending out mental command. Indeed, you can find whole families who, with proper magnetic assistance, become lucid, although not suspecting it in themselves, nor perhaps believing in the possibility of such things. I have met natural sensitives whose psychic sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell were capable of almost any test, whose existence they themselves scoffed at before submitting to mesmeric aid. I could relate ghost-stories by the hour, told me by Californian friends in confidence. Notwithstanding fear of ridicule, many such find their way into print: tales, for example, by engineers, of spectres keeping apace with their locomotives in the Majovi desert; camp-fire stories by travelers who went through that terrible desert strip, Death's Valley, and encountered apparitions who pointed to bleaching bones in the sand (in itself a complete statement); yarns by farmers, of haunted ranchos; and various phenomena for which Theosophy *alone* affords rational solutions.

I first heard of our philosophy upon meeting a chela in Mexico, who said that when in California he was enabled to rise from his body and leave it temporarily for certain purposes. His diet was, of course, almost wholly of those delicious fruits, which enabled him to perform such feats with more ease and safety than if his stomach were filled with fragments of cow or other luckless animal.

Mr. Bertram Keightley gives his testimony in T. P. S. No. 3.

"We have, however, in America at this stage the beginning of a new race. How different this race is from the old is shown by the success achieved by the Faith-Curers, Metaphysical Healers, Spiritualists, and others. The success of these things in this country proves that the American has undergone deep-seated physiological change, rendering his nature susceptible to finer vibrations and more mystical influences than those of the people of Europe. There are a greater number of psychics in America than in Europe. In the Eastern States there are probably ten times as many sensitives as in Europe, and in California twice as many as in the Eastern States. It is not so much the *glorious climate* as the result of the mixing of Spanish, Indian, and other bloods. These are the forerunners of another race, the sixth sub-race of the Aryan stock. By the development of a new race we hope to arrive at a psychic stage which will enable us to make scientific tests of the super-physical world which lies everywhere around us."

I cannot agree with Mr. Keightley that it is not due in part to atmospheric and astral conditions, but solely to the intermixing of Spanish, Indian, and other blood in California. In the first place, *precisely* the same intermixing has been going on in Texas and New

Mexico without *any* such result. We must bear in mind that the intermarrying of these races in California has been very exceptional, and has not extended over a period of many years. Ninety-nine per cent of the present population were not born there. On the Pacific Coast the intermarrying could not have taken place to an extent worthy of mention before the gold fever—between forty and fifty years ago, while on the Atlantic it has been going on for two hundred. Interblending of *blood alone* will not make a new race, for races come and go, continents sink and rise at the command of cyclic law. Specifically, such Karmic decrees emanate from the Dhyan Chôhans whose abode is the sun, who project a *psychic force* into earth's prana. That earth's astral light is purer in some places than others is evident,—else why need the yogi seek the rarefied air of the mountain-side, if not to be free from the deplorable astral conditions of great cities, teeming with passion, vice, and crime?

But I do not think Mr. Keightley meant that exactly, for in private conversation he said that he considered the psychic condition of the other side of the Rockies entirely different from this. In substance he said: "After getting beyond the divide one feels a weight lifted from the shoulders, the mind becomes buoyant and entirely free from conventionality. You feel like planning big undertakings in new and unheard-of ways, and feel the confidence within to carry out such projects." At an Aryan meeting he stated that his experience had been that one could hold an audience in the Eastern States to a close line of metaphysical reasoning much longer than in England. But a Californian audience could be held for a full half hour, following close abstruse thought with no apparent inattention or flagging of interest,—something he would not have believed before leaving England.

Dr. Archibald Keightley, lately on the Coast, makes similar statements, being of the opinion that California possesses a psychic force which is latent wherever else he has been,—and the Doctor is quite a traveler.

That California has afforded favorable conditions for occult manifestations was known to the Jesuits and Franciscan friars, who built those gloomy, picturesque missions through the forced labor of converted Indians,—for they were not too unworldly to prowl around in the mountains, using psychic faculties in search of gold and old mines that had been worked by a people whose very name has passed into oblivion. No doubt those old padres found it convenient to use their knowledge of mesmerism to convert the natives, as some of them in Spanish-American countries do to-day in order to gain a point.

To sum up in one sentence: there are occult conditions and forces at work in California not to be found this side of the Rockies.

And now I will offer an explanation. In brief it is this, that the Sierra Nevada mountains in that State do *not* belong to the geological strata of the present American continent: that they existed as islands—mountain peaks—of a sunken continent before the remainder of the United States was above water, or at least in any great way connected with it.

Let us compile the evidence, for it will make clear the condition of psychic affairs in that strip of country, the “Italy of America”. The Sierra Nevada are composed of solid granite—granite (as I have seen in localities) that has *crumbled* in the untold ages it has stood there. It is, moreover, fine-grained granite, the most durable of all,—so what can one do but allow great antiquity to such strata? Decomposed granite is also found in parts of Georgia and France, and geologists speak of the action of carbonic and other acids from the interior, in explanation of its state. That the eastern portion of California was once a sea is evident, for a part of it is now below the level of the ocean, and bears resemblance to Sahara in other respects. Spanish navigators are known to have explored further up the Gulf of California than the sea now extends. The reason why the inland sea north of the divide has vanished can be understood from an antiquated joke which is given currency everywhere in Southern Arizona. It is about a late citizen of Yuma (the hottest place in America) returning from the other side, who stated that he was in hell, yet returned for his overcoat!

Turning to *Isis* (vol. 1, p. 594), we find copious extracts from Jacolliot on the islands of the Pacific. He says: “A religious belief, common to the two opposite extremes of the Oceanic world, affirms that all these islands once formed two immense continents, inhabited by yellow men and black men, always at war.” This war, as said by H. P. B., relates to the struggle between the “Sons of God” and the “sons of giants,” or the inhabitants and magicians of Atlantis. Jacolliot proceeds to show that the Sandwich Islands, New Zealand, Easter Island, and all of Polynesia were included in this continent. The natives, although too far apart to have communicated with each other, all had common traditions, languages, religious beliefs, and customs.

Now had this eminent scholar looked at the mountains of California, he doubtless would have included them in that vast continent, for there is nothing in his line of evidence wanting in respect to this locality, as witness the statements of many investigators as to Malayan affinities in the California natives. For if the Sandwich Islands off the Coast, why not the Coast?

I have read somewhere in Theosophic literature that the flora of California show a similarity to those of Anstralua, or some of the isles of the Pacific,—another line of evidence needed. The people have unconsciously recognized this magnetic tie by transplanting many Australian fruit and shade trees, along with a scale-bug that threatens the entire fruit industry.

But when it comes to vegetation, California has something the rest of the world cannot show: trees as large around as a house, and towering skyward far beyond the height of Trinity church cross or the *World* flagstaff. The largest is 112 feet in circumference, and was once 450 feet high—taller by half than Trinity steeple. When you go to your office on Wall street to-morrow, look at that steeple and imagine such a tree.

*Think of it!* These mighty giants have looked calmly down upon the vain doings of puny mites called men for *full two thousand years!* They witnessed the departing grandeur of Egypt; the rise and fall of mighty empires; the babe at Bethlehem; the beginning of Popery—and let us hope will see its end. They will live on and on, communing with the clouds, should these white ants desist from cutting stage roads through their trunks, or from erecting *hotels* on their sawn-off stumps. Nowhere else can such monsters be found. What can they be but surviving offspring from a now undreamed-of antediluvian forest? For as flora and fauna change simultaneously with Man, and as (paraphrasing Scripture) “WE were giants in those days,” these mammoth trees are another straw as indicating the Sierra Nevada’s place in relation to lost continents. Although many lands, as, for example, Madagascar, belonging to Lemuria and later to Atlantis, are now in existence, still at one time or another they were beneath the wave, and could not have preserved the living seeds of pre-historic vegetation.

The natives of California who were so mercilessly treated by Jesuits until they became almost extinct, afford anthropological proof needed. Mr. Steven Powers, who investigated their origin, argues that those north of Mount Shasta had Chinese ancestry, and this agrees with the statement of Prof. Pengelly that “at some period of the tertiary epoch Northeastern Asia was united to Northwestern America, by the line where the Aleutian chain of islands now extends.” “It must not be forgotten,” says Mr. Wheeler of the U. S. Surveying Expedition in his report to Congress, “that Dr. Pickering, of the U. S. Exploring Expedition, expresses himself very decidedly of the opinion that the tribes of the Sacramento had Polynesian affinities of a marked character, and that he classed the Californian native with the Malay race.

... Yet to accept Dr. Pickering's view and consider them as Malays would be slightly changing the ground from Mr. Powers' determination that they had Chinese affinities; yet the statements of the two authorities are conclusive as to the marked difference which they have each noticed between the Indians of the North and East and those of Central California." This is substantiated, Mr. Wheeler adds, by a number of authorities, and gives a long list of them. On a succeeding page is the following: "Prof. Whitney is satisfied that man existed in the pliocene of California. He further states that the evidence of the existence of man during the post-pliocene period, the deposits of which were formed subsequent to the cessation of volcanic activity in the Sierra Nevada, which period of activity was closed by the eruption of the basalt, was so well established as to show that man continued to exist in California in company with the mastodon and other extinct animals. This man was as far advanced as the Indian of to-day." These investigators are inclined to the opinion that there must have been a Malayan emigration, which was confined in extent to the Coast.

A seer told me that the native spooks came to him with the information that their ancestry ran back 30,000 years. I could give a great deal of corroboration of this character, but refrain on account of the untrustworthiness of the lower astral, so sadly in lack of repair.

But since carefully compiling all this evidence, I found more of a most positive character in the second volume of *Secret Doctrine*, p. 328, where H. P. B. says that a "large bit" of California was a part of a pre-historic continent.

Now, granted that the mountains under discussion belong to the great Atlantis, how does that explain the situation? And now we enter the third section for consideration. As explained on p. 397, *Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1: "All the thoughts and emotions, all the learning and knowledge, revealed and acquired, of the early races found their pictorial representation in allegory and parable. Why? Because the spoken word has a potency unknown to, unsuspected and disbelieved in, by the modern sages. . . . No student was ever allowed to recite historical, religious, or any real events in so many unmistakable words, lest the powers connected with the event should be once more attracted. Such events were narrated only during the initiation, and every student had to record them in corresponding symbols, drawn out of his own mind, and examined later by his master before they were finally accepted."

This extract clearly shows the great potency of magnetic *association*, and how, if having once been part of a continent on

which magic ran riot and psychic faculties were used as readily we use the physical, California could retain the lingering echoes of that magic. The prana of that locality would be different, tending to unconventionality and psychism. Surely earth's magnetism is very strong there, as indicated by the phenomenal growth of vegetation. You can mow eight good crops of alfalfa (a kind of hay) per year, while money can be made on even high-priced land by growing the famous Eucalyptus tree for fuel purposes. Rose bushes creep up over the roofs of cottages, and hedges are made of geraniums and lilies.

As another indication of a difference in earth's prana there, no lightning or thunder ever occurs. A good clap of thunder would scare the old 49'er out of his wits, and cause him to think (for the time being) that perhaps the preacher was right respecting the lung capacity of Gabriel. Since the great boom, a very faint grumbling is heard after a cloud has given forth a fire-fly glow, but such a phenomenon has been brought by eastern people along with the rest of their baggage. Once upon a time a little snow fell in San Francisco, and all the brokers and tradespeople ruined each other's good clothes in the fond delusion that they were playing snowball.

If there are any of those blessed Atlantean elementals still hovering around, it would account for many strange happenings to sensitives, among them a relative of mine, who have climbed the Sierra Nevada mountains. Perhaps those same elementals will act in the capacity of race Skandhas for the new sixth sub-race that is to be brought forth in America, and which will, as gathered by Mr. Bertram Keightley from H. P. B.'s remarks, *make its first appearance in California*. The sixth sense will there make its appearance first, and demand a new era in Western Psychology. The forces at work for such an object are greater than the people, who are unconsciously drifted on by this mighty current—a current which rules the destinies of continents.

And now we pass to the last consideration: Do the Californians wield this force in their radical progress? No. It wields them. The masses of the Golden State who run after strange philosophy are nearly as lacking in right discrimination as the bulk of the Eastern people who are content with household gods worshipped by forefathers. The latest mystical jargon will not help if aback of it are not precise concepts. *Hurray, boys!* will not solve the deeper problems of life; and unbridled psychism will mystify even when it does not lead far out into the left-hand path.

But let us hope that in the disintegration of old religious creeds

fast going on, and in the re-forming into new ones (for the unphilosophic "rank-and-file" must needs rely on *some* system)—let us hope that in such substitutes there will be woven in a few tenets of the Wisdom-Religion, such as Karma and Reincarnation; for no one, believing that he has lived and will live again many times on earth, and that he will be paid in the coin he gives, will fail to put forth more earnest efforts for self-regeneration than either the Christian, who believes he can escape merited punishment for past misconduct by throwing his sinful burden on the shoulders of another, or the Materialist, who thinks that death will cancel all bad accounts.

May many such seeds be planted in the fertile soil of California, where they will grow as does the stately Eucalyptus, whose twigs in spring make greater movement than the hour hand of a watch. For such purpose may you *all* be enabled to take a trip to that sun-kissed shore, where the ladies can revel in ecstasy in a wilderness of exquisite, though unpronounceable, flowers, while the men do good to their gastronomic souls among vines and fruit-trees bending to the ground with the most delicious food this world affords.

You will, of course, visit Yosemite Valley, with its towering domes, its waterfall of a thousand feet, and its scenic effects which combine to fill the spectator with a feeling of delight, mingled not a little with awe. The mystic lives near to Nature's heart, and in a grand, overwhelming scene his soul aspires to a state unknown to, unfelt by, the common herd who are content to vegetate, procreate, and—perish. For immortality is a thing not given, but to be striven for, and *earned*.

Since in the formation of this coming sub-race psychism will be rampant, it is our stern duty to place before all a sound moral philosophy which says, These powers and faculties must NOT be used for the benefit of the personality. For where outside of the writings of H. P. Blavatsky is there found so high a standard as that? Are not all these pseudo-mystics, who are becoming so numerous in America, eager to utilize the *highest power in the Universe* (as they believe) for the curing of diseased bodies—bodies in many cases made such by setting aside, repeatedly, common-sense rules of health?

There lies *great danger* in coming times, and naught but the grandest of all ideals—Universal Brotherhood—can save from a wave of psychism and black magic. Let us redouble our efforts that our noble philosophy may be placed before the people to prevent "man's inhumanity to man" being carried up into another plane—a plane of forces—where the consequences will be even more lasting and terrible.



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## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

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### **Krishna, the Christ.**

*[A Paper read before the Aryan T. S., New York City.]*

**I**N the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, a portion of which is read regularly at these Aryan meetings, we hear a good deal of Krishna. And it has been explained to us over and over again that the Krishna of the poem is not to be confounded with the personage of that name who is said to have lived in India some five thousand years ago. The Krishna of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* is the representative of man's Higher Self, just as Arjuna, to whom the divine instructions are given, is the representative of the human Ego, beset with all the cares and anxieties and burdens of the lower personality, yet reaching out unto higher things, and struggling ever towards that union with the One which is the goal of human destiny, the perfection and completion of human development. Now the Higher Self or Krishna is not a person, not an entity, not a god. Man, the human Ego, united with the Higher Self, becomes a god, but the Higher Self, Krishna, the Christ, is above all the gods. As he says to Arjuna: "Neither the assemblage of the Gods nor the Adept Kings know my origin, because I am the origin of all the Gods and of the Adepts" (chapter x). And Arjuna styles him: "Supreme Spirit, Creator and Master of all that lives, God of Gods, and Lord of all the universe." (chapter x). And again: "O mighty Being, thou who art greater than Brahmā, who art the first maker. O Eternal God of Gods! O habitation of the universe! Thou art the first of gods, the most ancient Spirit, thou art the final supreme receptacle." (chapter xi).

Krishna is the divine spiritual principle or essence in man; a

ray of the Absolute, brooding over and overshadowing the human soul; the source of spiritual strength and illumination; the divine center from which all holy thoughts, all high ideals, all noble purposes proceed; the spark which kindles into a flame the sacred fire within the temple's innermost shrine; the love and life which pervade our whole being and cause our hearts to overflow with sympathy and loving-kindness to every creature. And where Krishna dwells, felt, recognized, longed-for, obeyed, there is the Kingdom of Heaven, the peace which passeth all understanding, the rest and joy and happiness which are the lot of these blessed Ones who have overcome the lower self and have found the pearl of great price.

Now what Krishna is to the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, Christ is to the *New Testament*. What the former is to the mystical Hindû, the latter is to the modern Christian. The two, as I see and understand them, are not twain, but one,—the same principle, the same divine emanation, the same inner light and life, the same Supreme who is all and in all. And as we should not confound the Krishna the eastern poem with the historical Krishna, so we should carefully distinguish between Jesus and the Christ. Jesus was the man, born of human parents, subject to human weaknesses, tempted in all things like as other men are tempted, made perfect as other men have to be by trials and suffering. For, as Paul puts it in his *Epistle to the Hebrews*: "It became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

And as Jesus was the man, so the Christ was the divine within, the God, the Higher Self, in no ways differing from the Divine in each of us here this evening, except in this,—that in our case, owing to the blindness of our spiritual sight and the dominance in us of the lower self with all its earthly passions and desires, we catch only a glimpse now and then, and a faint glimpse at that, of the light within; the God who should be our Sovereign Lord is a stranger whose commands are rarely heard, and even less frequently obeyed; we prefer the flesh pots of Egypt to Ambrosia; we are so occupied with raking together the sticks and straws which the world offers, that the crown of immortality waiting for us to stretch out our hand and grasp is despised and neglected, and the old Adam of our lower nature is so strong and imperious that the still, small "voice of the silence" is no longer heard.

In the case of Jesus the old Adam had been so far subdued and the union between the lower and the Higher Self made so complete that he could say and say truly, "I and my Father (the Absolute) are one". In him, as Paul puts it in his *Epistle to the*

*Colossians*, "dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily". Thus united to his Higher Self and one with the God within, "all power was given to him in heaven and earth". At his word or touch pain and disease fled; the blind received their sight, the deaf heard, and the lame leaped as a hart. Illumined by the Divine within, he astonished the Doctors when only a boy of twelve with his understanding and answers; and later, when he began his public ministry, all who heard him wondered at the "gracious words which fell from his lips", and bore willing testimony to the fact that "never man spake like this man". Like Krishna, too, who showed his divine form to Arjuna, Jesus took his favorite disciples into a high mountain apart, and there was transfigured before them, his face shining as the sun and his raiment becoming white as the light, while celestial visitants appeared talking with him, and a mysterious voice issued from an overshadowing cloud.

Now in all there was nothing very wonderful, nothing supernatural, nothing miraculous. The mighty works which Jesus did were simply the natural result of those occult powers which any individual may acquire by union with the Supreme. "The works that I do," says Jesus, speaking to his disciples, "shall ye do also; and greater works than these shall ye do, because I go to the Father." Peter, one of the disciples, healed the lame man at the Gate Beautiful of the temple, raised Dorcas to life, and, indeed, possessed the gift of healing to such an extraordinary degree that the people brought forth the sick into the streets and laid them upon couches that at least the shadow of the apostle passing by might overshadow some of them. Paul and the other apostles also exercised similar powers which they attributed to the indwelling Christ. "I can do all things," said Paul, "through Christ who strengtheneth me."

Sometimes these wondrous works were ascribed to Jesus and sometimes to the Christ, even by those who were privileged to witness them. And it is not to be wondered at, therefore, if modern Christians have fallen into the same error, for all through the *New Testament* the two names are used loosely and indifferently, pretty much as we now use the given name and the surname of any individual. But there are indications that the difference between Jesus and the Christ was well understood by at least some of the writers, and it may not be amiss, therefore, to refer to one or two passages where Christ is spoken of as a principle or spiritual process, and not as a person. When the Children of Israel left Egypt for Canaan, the land of promise, they wandered, we are told, for forty years in the wilderness of Sinai. At first they suffered greatly from the scarcity of water and its poor quality, and

were constantly murmuring and complaining. But at Mount Horeb their leader, Moses, smote the rock in the presence of the people, and the waters gushed out in a stream which is said to have followed them in all their subsequent wanderings. Now this incident is referred to by St. Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians: "They" (the Israelites), he says, "did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual rock which followed them, and that rock was *Christ*." Here Christ plainly stands for spiritual strength and refreshment, and, as all this took place before the man Jesus was born, it is equally plain that Christ is not Jesus, but existed long before the latter appeared. This point is also brought out by Jesus himself in one of his discourses with the Jews. "Your father Abraham," said the great teacher to the carping multitude, "your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it and was glad." "What," replied the Jews, "thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" "Verily, verily, I say unto you," was the answer, "before Abraham was, I am." (*John, viii, 56-68*). So the Christ existed not only before Jesus, but before Abraham, the founder of the Jewish race.

Let us turn again to another significant passage in one of Paul's letters. To the Galatians he writes (chapter iv, 19): "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you." Now what is meant by Christ being born or formed in us? Dr. Kingsford gives the following explanation which is well worth quoting. Regarding man as consisting of body and soul, illuminated by the spirit, she says, in discussing the Fall and Redemption:

"In creating man, God creates one whole and perfect being, formed of two distinct parts. Adam the earthy, exterior man, and Eve the spiritual and interior man, his soul and 'living mother.' These two are joined together by God in perfect union as one creature, and made for the time indispensable to each other. Adam, as the manifested personality or man, is not complete, that is, is not a man having manhood, until Eve, the soul or woman, is added to him as helpmeet and guide. By the addition of her the two natures become one Humanity.

"From this state of perfection Humanity soon falls. For Eve, the soul, withdrawing her steadfast gaze from the proper object of her regard, namely, her spirit, God, fastens it on things below, things earthly and material, which are to her the 'forbidden fruit,' since her nature is spiritual. Beholding this fruit and finding it pleasant to the eyes, she puts forth her hand and plucks of it, and gives of it to her husband, or Adam, to eat with her.

"This is ever the history of sin. . . . Sin is of the soul, and it comes of the soul's inclination to the things of sense. The sin consummated, the result is inevitable. . . . Having rejected God, and no longer looking up to him as her Lord and King, the soul, Eve, falls under the sway of Adam and the body. He rules her and her desire is unto him; and thenceforth matter has dominion in them over spirit. The garden of perfection is lost, and the world becomes for them a wilderness.

"But notwithstanding the soul's fall, there is still hope of recovery for man. . . . For the fallen soul, retaining in some degree her spirituality, and recoiling from a merely material estimate of things, constitutes in the man a constant protest against his engrossment by his lower nature. It is, therefore, of the soul, restored to her pure estate, and not of the body and its animal propensities, that the redeemed man must be born. The first Adam is of the earth, earthy, and liable to death. The second Adam is from heaven and triumphant over death,—“for sin has no more dominion over him.” He, therefore, (the Regenerate Man) is the product of a soul purified from defilement by matter and released from subjection to the body. Such a soul is called Virgin. And she has for spouse, not matter—for that she has renounced—but the divine Spirit, which is God. And the man born of this union is in the image of God and is God made man; that is, he is *Christ*; and is the Christ thus born to every man who redeems him and endows him with eternal life. For in him the man becomes transmuted from matter to spirit. He is the man himself, by regeneration become a son at once of man and of God."

Briefly then, the soul united with and under the dominion of the body, the lower personality, is the carnal man or mind which is declared to be at enmity against God (or Spirit), for it is not subject to the law of God (or the higher spiritual law) nor, indeed, can be. When, on the other hand, the soul, freeing herself from the allurements of Maya and triumphing over the lower personality, turns to the Higher Self, the New Man of the bible is said to be born. That is Christmas morning to the individual in whom this new birth takes place. True, the Christ is still only an infant, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in the manger of the inner self, with the animal passions and desires represented by the ox and ass of the allegory, not yet wholly cast out. But he will daily grow in strength and grace and in favor with God and man, till the work of transmutation is wholly accomplished and the human has been merged into the Divine.

For those who want to pursue this subject farther, I can hardly do better than refer them to Dr. Kingsford's fascinating work,

*The Perfect Way, or the Finding of Christ*, which one of our members, Mr. Lovell, has published in cheap and handsome form. We may not agree entirely with some of the eccentricities of the author, but on the point under discussion the work is very full, and, as it seems to me, after all the light thrown upon it from other sources, eminently sound. And a few extracts from it will be more interesting and instructive than any remarks of mine could be. It may not be out of place, however, before quoting these to notice the way in which the two names of "Jesus" and "Christ" are sometimes combined to express different conceptions or phases of his character. "Jesus" is the man; "Christ," the God within. "Jesus Christ"—putting Jesus first—symbolises the man with the human or lower nature still dominant or not wholly subdued. "Christ Jesus"—putting the Christ first—represents the new regenerate man, in whom the lower nature has been overcome and the spiritual reigns supreme. All through the Gospels the great teacher is generally spoken of as "Jesus," the full term, "Jesus Christ" occurring only five times in all, and the name "Christ" about a dozen times in each Gospel. In the Epistles he is usually called "Christ" or "Jesus Christ," and occasionally "Christ Jesus." Whenever the inner spiritual life is referred to the "Jesus" is invariably dropped, and the terms used are "Christ" and "Christ Jesus." In the first two extracts from *The Perfect Way* which follow, it will be noticed that the term "Christ Jesus" is used:

"Christ Jesus, then, is no other than the hidden and true man of the Spirit, the Perfect Humanity, the express image of the Divine Glory. And it is possible to man, by the renunciation—which mystically is the crucifixion—of his outer and lower self, to rise wholly into his inner and higher self, and, becoming suffused or anointed of the Spirit, to 'put on Christ', propitiate God, and redeem the earthly and material." (Sec. iv, 24.)

"For such of us as know and live the inner life are saved, not by any cross or Calvary eighteen hundred years ago, not by any physical blood-shedding, not by any vicarious passion of tears and scourge and spear; but by the Christ Jesus, the God with us, the Immanuel of the heart, born, working mighty works, and offering oblation in our own lives, in our own persons, redeeming us from the world, and making us sons of God, and heirs of everlasting life." (iv, 32.)

Again: "The attainment in himself of a pure and divine spirit is, therefore, the first object and last achievement of him who seeks to realize the loftiest ideal of which humanity is capable. He who does this is not an adept merely. . . . It is love that distin-

guishes the Christ;—a truth implied, among other ways, in the name and character assigned in mystic legends to the favorite disciple of the Christs. To Krishna, his Arjuna; to Buddha, his Ananda; to Jesus, his John;—all terms identical in meaning and denoting the feminine and tender moiety of the Divine Nature. He, therefore, and he alone who possesses this spirit in quality and quantity without measure, has and is ‘Christ’. He is God’s anointed, suffused and brimming with the Spirit, and having in virtue thereof the power of the ‘Dissolvent’ and of ‘Transmutation’ in respect of the whole man. Herein lay the grand secret of that philosophy which made ‘Hermes’ to be accounted the ‘trainer of the Christs’.

“Christ, then, is primarily not a person but a principle, a process, a system of life and thought, by the observance of which man becomes purified from matter and transmuted into Spirit.

“Thus manifested, he is said to ‘destroy the works of the devil’, for he destroys that which gives preëminence to matter, and so reëstablishes the kingdom of Spirit, that is, of God. This, the interior part of the process of Christ, is the essential part. Whether first or last, the spiritual being must be perfected. Without this interior perfection nothing that is done in the body, or exterior man, is of any avail, save only in so far as it may minister to the essential end. The body is but an instrument, existing for the use and sake of the soul, and not for itself. And it is for the soul, and not for itself, that it must be perfected.” (viii, 12-14.)

And again: “The Christs are, above all things, Media. But this not as ordinarily supposed, even by many who are devoted students of spiritual science. For, so far from suffering his own vivifying spirit to step aside in order that another may enter, the Christ is one who so develops, purifies, and in every way perfects his spirit as to assimilate and make it one with the universal spirit, the God of the Macrocosm, so that the God without and the God within may freely combine and mingle, making the universal the individual, the individual the universal. Thus inspired and filled with God, the Soul kindles into flame; and God identified with the man speaks through him, making the man utter himself in the name of God.

“It is in his office and character as Christ, and not in his own individuality, that the Man Regenerate proclaims himself ‘the way, the truth, and the life’, ‘the door’, and the like. For in being, as has been said, the connecting link between the creature and God, the Christ truly represents the door or gate through which all ascending souls must pass to union with the Divine; and save through which ‘no man cometh unto the Father’ . . . .

“To attain to the perfection of the Christ—to polarise, that is, the Divine Spirit, without measure, and to become a man of power and a medium for the Highest—though open potentially to all, is actually and in the present open if to any but to few. And these are, necessarily, they only who, having passed through many transmigrations, and advanced far on their way towards maturity, have sedulously turned their lives to the best account by means of the steadfast development of all the higher faculties and qualities of men; and who, while not declining the experiences of the body, have made the spirit, and not the body, their object and aim. Aspiring to the redemption in himself of each plane of man’s fourfold nature, the candidate for Christhood submits himself to discipline and training the most severe, at once physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual, and rejects as valueless or pernicious whatever would fail to minister to his one end, deeming no task too onerous, no sacrifice too painful, so that he be spiritually advanced thereby. And how varied soever the means, there is one rule to which he remains constant throughout, the rule, namely, of love. The Christ he seeks is the pathway to God; and to fail in the least degree in respect of love would be to put himself back in his journey. . . .

“To gain power over Death there must be self-denial and governance. Such is the ‘Excellent Way’, though it be the *Via Dolorosa*. He only can follow it who accounts the Resurrection worth the Passion, the Kingdom worth the Obedience, the power worth the suffering. And he, and he only, does not hesitate whose time has come.” (L, VIII, 12-22.)

To become a Christ, to live the Christ-life, to carry the teachings of the Higher Self into daily duties and surroundings, is indeed a difficult thing, but not an impossibility. Others have done it before, and why not we? The saints and sages of all times and climes have painfully toiled up the rugged slopes of Calvary, each bearing his cross, each wounded with the scourge and thorn; and we must tread the same sorrowful path. How this can be done even in these modern days may be seen in a charming little story of George McDonald’s, entitled *A Rough Shaking*. It is a story of a Christ-like child, poor, hungry, suffering, ill-treated, passing through many bitter experiences, yet always gentle, loving, patient, unselfish, full of sympathy and tenderness to all creatures, and amid all temptation and trial ever keeping the lamp within bright and pure. Verily, the Christs still walk the earth, and are found among the busy haunts of men. May it be our happy lot to discern their foot-prints and to follow their holy example!

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## THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: AMERICAN SECTION.

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## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

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### **A Theosophical View of Woman.**

[*Read before the Golden Gate T. S. by Mrs. Mercie M. Thirds.*]

**I**N that Unity which we call the Absolute, and to whose all-inclusiveness nothing can be external, two aspects are found side by side. We call them life and nature, spirit and matter, the unmanifested and the manifested. But we must remember that these different aspects in no sense destroy the unity underlying them, but are merely phases of one and the same thing. Like two sides of a coin they are inseparable from each other, while neither one nor the other, nor both combined, express the whole of that Reality of which they are but aspects. In the same way, day and night are alternating phases of time, which includes both, but is itself something different from either light or darkness.

This duality is found on every plane of being and in every phase of manifestation, though its transformations are numberless as evolution unrolls the panorama of life. We find it in the "Great Breath", that flow of life into objectivity, followed by its evolutionary ebb backward toward the Divine. As force and matter it lurks in the most materialistic conceptions of creation; as spirit and soul it defines the nature of our immortal selves. Heaven and earth, good and evil, life and death, are similarly opposite poles of one truth. Indeed, there is nothing which does not manifest this dual nature, while each side again may be dual in its turn. Thus, force and matter are inseparable, but each again

has a twofold nature. Force may be active or passive, positive or negative; matter may be regarded as life in objectivity, or as spirit plus a garb.

A moment's thought will show us that this principle of duality lies at the very base of manifestation. A line, whether viewed mathematically or philosophically, might go on forever without result, but when to length is added breadth, a surface has been formed. Similarly, creative power could have no reality without the power to produce. They are, indeed, one potency displayed in two aspects. If force were only active, it would spend itself vainly in an eternal outward flow of vibrations; if it were merely passive, manifestation would never have sprung from the bosom of Infinity; or if so sprung, this energy, in the guise of attraction, would, like the middle point within a sphere, calmly rest in the center of the universe, swallowing its own circumference. Only by a union of these two apparently conflicting powers could worlds be formed or held to their appointed course. Rotation is their child, whether displayed in the spinning of a top, or, in its wider phase of revolution, when stars sweep majestically around a central sun. So on every plane and in every molecule of matter; tangential force is needed to begin and to sustain creative processes, while the opposing might of attraction is needed to hold these energies in check and to bind them to their proper task.

Of like merely phenomenal nature is the manifestation of sex. The spiritual essence, or Monad, which runs through the whole evolutionary cycle and is itself the cause of that evolution, is neither male nor female. It is a spark of the Divine Flame to which we can no more attribute sex than to a star. It is life, which we can only conceive of as intelligence and consciousness, a unit which thus always presents a triple aspect. This spark has the power to clothe itself in matter, evolving ever higher and higher forms as its intelligence permeates matter and awakens consciousness. In a few words: creation springs from intelligence, is sustained by life, and evolves consciousness. Thus, though merely attributes of a unit, each of these qualities presents its own specific character, and is therefore called a principle.

Intelligence, the creative principle, is distinctly dual. On higher planes it includes love and knowledge; on lower, thought and emotion. Being dual in its nature it creates a dual world. But, as neither tangential nor attractive energy, nor the sum of both, expresses all the qualities of force, so neither male nor female, nor both together, can be regarded as a complete expression of that supernal spark which is our true Self. Twin leaves are they upon a stem, but the stem they are not. For a brief season they

are worn to catch the sunlight and to drink the dew of earth, but only that they may gather nourishment for their parent stem, which, in turn, will subserve still higher forms, even flower and fruit. Leaves give no hint of that mysterious growth which finally evolves fruit; nor is sex prophetic of that unfoldment which transforms humanity into the Divine.

Regarding the soul, then, as a sexless intelligence, we perceive that it has two qualities which alternately seek expression in objective life. Call them, if you will, thought and feeling, intellect and heart; or that restless, roving desire which binds us to earth-life, and the still aspiration that draws us ever back to heaven. These qualities are, of course, shared by each sex, because they pertain to the inner, sexless being, not to the body, although, to a degree, their manifestation follows sex and assigns to each its own specific character. It certainly could not be said that man embodies the mind of humanity or that woman monopolizes its heart, but only that in our human stage of development one phase or the other usually dominates our lives. In man, thought and desire are controlling elements; in woman, love and aspiration. Man creates and rules material conditions; woman produces and draws toward spiritual realms.

That poetical fancy which called man the body, woman the soul, of mankind was surely illuminated by a flash of intuition, for in a very real sense the sexes do bear such relation to each other. Man, as active energy, plunges outward into objective life, gaining its strength but losing somewhat of his hold on subjective states. Woman, as passive energy, resists this earthward tendency, so keeping a closer kinship with interior life. In this there is no question of superiority, because each is simply a phase of that growth through which every soul must pass on its evolutionary journey. As well argue which is more truly time—the day or the night.

It is evident that the development of our soul nature involves the complete unfoldment of its dual character. No one-sided cultivation can result in good, nor can one-half its forces be suppressed without ultimate ruin to the other. Love without intellect will waste its riches, producing nothing. Intellect without love will circle about self and be finally engulfed in the vortex of an unchecked egotism. In normal growth they expand together, all that enlarges the mind giving breadth to the heart, and all that makes the heart more generous adding clearness to the mind. To be sure, there are frequent cases of one-sided development which seem to contradict this general rule, but that it is a rule reason and observation equally affirm. Prejudice was never known to widen hearts,

but, on the contrary, we see it always limiting the power of sympathy. So with intolerance or any other characteristic of an undeveloped mind. On the other hand, we all know that an envious or spiteful heart narrows judgment and clouds mental perception. The reason for this is not hard to find. We easily shut our hearts to those whom we adjudge unworthy, and usually have no difficulty in laying the fault of our narrowed sympathy at their door, not at our own. So with every ungenerous or unfraternal feeling. It leaves its impress on the thought with all its limitations, for are not thought and feeling but aspects of one mind?

There is, moreover, another relation existing between them which is more obscure, but which I will try to make clear, because it seems to solve what minds of deepest insight have always called the "Mystery of womanhood," and to point in no uncertain manner to woman's true position and destiny. Let us not forget that our true Self is that intelligent spark within us which is superior to our thinking and feeling. This does not mean that it is something different from that mind or external to it. In plainest words I would define spirit as the sum total of capacity for unfoldment; mind, the degree to which it has already expanded. We all know that human achievement is no complete measure of our possibilities, and that a man's whole nature is never summed up in his speech and acts. What remains unexpressed is often a large part of his being, and is always the very aroma of his personality. So does life never express itself in its entirety, but is always unfolding.

What we would discover is the process of development. We have seen the dual mind put forth like leaves to gather nourishment for a still higher phase of life. This next higher phase we call the Higher Mind, or true individuality, because it represents the complete intellectual unfoldment of man as an individuality. To this Higher Mind our mind and heart are stepping-stones, or we may regard them as mile-posts on the path of development. One—the mind—is active; that is, it puts forth its energies, investigates, creates, seeking ever to enlarge its possessions; the other—the heart—is passive; that is, it rests within itself, assimilating to its own nature every impression which it receives. What our minds contain may or may not belong to us in the sense of being a part of ourselves, but our hearts are our very essence. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," said a prophet of old. Noble sentiments may inspire the mind with admiration, but if the heart does not feel them they are as foreign to the real man as is the coat he wears. We may be convinced of the beauty of holiness, but if our hearts secretly incline to vice, that conviction has profited us

nothing. Vainly our minds confess the truth of universal brotherhood if our hearts do not respond with warm, fraternal sympathy. Without that feeling our profession is a pretence and a sham.

This is the reason why love has always been upheld as the gateway to heaven. "What shall I do to gain eternal life?", asked the disciple of Jesus; and the Master answered, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself." Buddha said:

"Yet must this Law of Love reign King of all  
Before the Kalpas end."

And what says St. Paul, another master of knowledge?

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing. Love never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away."

Truly, the measure of a man is his heart. And so it is that out of the heart is his birth into a higher state. Thought built on thought to all eternity can never span that gulf which separates the human from the divine. Only Love can bridge that mystic chasm, for he is born with wings from the heart, his mother.

Need I point out the analogy between this relation of mind and heart and the method of interior growth by means of life, now in one sex, now in the other? The soul, as man, gathers; as woman it assimilates, while at the same time keeping up this dual life in the smaller cycle of each embodiment on earth. As man it struggles; as woman it endures. As man it learns through action; as woman it realizes through feeling. As man its ambition would vault to starry heaven; as woman its sympathy quells this soaring egotism, and by self-sacrifice merges it into a grander altruism.

In accordance with this view we find that woman's position is at any time the acknowledged gauge of a people's progress, and that we may confidently look to her for indications of the stage beyond. He is a shallow student who thinks that courtesy is the sole cause of that increased regard felt for women by civilized races. No, the cause lies deep within our human nature. So long as man is engrossed with external, material conditions, and in proportion to the strength of his egotism, will he look with contempt upon his weaker comrade who certainly does lack in just those qualities which seem to him alone worthy of respect. Indeed, how can he be expected to appreciate qualities which lie be-

yond his ken? The life within is for him non-existent, and he knows no power which does not express itself in action. He lives on a plane of which he is and must always remain the master, for his forces are centered there to a degree which is impossible in woman. With Christ, the embodiment of divine as she is of human love, she may say, "My kingdom is not of this world." But when, though still living in a material world, a race reaches up through intellectual and moral to some spiritual unfolding, woman's true nature is first discerned and her powers respected. The self-centered now, for the first time, begins to comprehend the heroism of self-sacrifice. Fame grows dim beside the lustre of holiness, and kindly sympathy is seen to wield a power greater than that of armies.

Then it is woman's day, for none deny her greater purity, tenderness, and self-abnegation. Where they once seemed like weakness, they stand forth as power. Once fettered, they are now free, and by their willing might humanity is once more lifted Godward.

It is woman, too, whose eye is swift to catch a flash from spiritual heights. Her intuition has always been a puzzle to even deriding sceptics, who could not but admit that she was, at least, an apt guesser. But glimpses of the Higher Mind are now less rare, and in its power to directly perceive truth is found an explanation of woman's occasional "oddity." This faculty is akin to genius, and all inspiration is an unfolding of this incipient power. This explains, too, the largely feminine cast of all inspired minds, whose utterances are not the conclusions of logical upbuilding, but express a direct perception of truth. The fact that woman's mind is rarely creative does not conflict with this view, for the power to perceive and the ability to give form to that perception are by no means one and the same thing. The fact that woman has inspired—that is, suggested by her thought—much of man's noblest creative work, has been generously admitted by many a genius to whom alone credit has been awarded by the world.

Let us cheerfully admit that woman has not been a great actor in the world; but if she has given the cue for noble thoughts and elevating sentiments, has inspired actors with lofty ambition, and fired the audience with her own magnetic sympathy, who shall say she has done nothing? Surely not the Theosophist who sees beyond the trappings of a stage into that realm where silent forces dwell, and of whose power the action is but a minor part. What if no crowds applaud or voices speak her name? Silence is growth, and in the dim recesses of her heart is slumbering that child which shall be born as the Christos, bright ray of selfless love.

But what of woman's future? It seems clear that with spiri-

tual growth her influence will be more honored by the world, her special qualities more fully recognized. When self-aggrandizement ceases to be the goal of our ambitions, and in its place the grand conception of universal brotherhood has spoken peace to a warring world, woman will come into her earthly inheritance. Then there will be

“Two heads in council, two beside the hearth,  
Two in the tangled business of the world.”

And still beyond, in that path of evolution we are treading, there stand the “Gates of Gold.” Neither man nor woman can find entrance there. Souls only lift their heavy latch, souls that as man have labored, as woman have suffered, until earth’s illusions have fallen off like a garment, and sex has been forgotten. Mind and heart are equally unfolded, and from the two their child has risen. Complete in itself, it knows no longing, for it has no lack. The garb it wears is but the tool it works with, and may be form of man or woman, What matters when the task is done and we have passed beyond?



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## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

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### Fragments on the Astral Light.

[A Paper by Mr. Geo. P. Keeney, read before the Golden Gate Lodge, San Francisco, March 19, 1891.]

THEOSOPHY, like other systems of philosophy, is gifted with a nomenclature of its own. As to facilitate the study of chemistry the student first masters the elements before acquiring a knowledge of their properties, so to the student of Nature's finer forces is it essential that their distinctive terms be understood before entering upon the laws governing their interaction.

Of these various terms and phrases, which are somewhat vague alike to the students of Theosophy and of science, there is none of more absorbing interest than that of the astral light.

The *Working Glossary* of the Theosophical student defines the astral (English derivative) as the light from the stars, the lowest principle of Akâsa; and Akâsa is defined as a subtle fluid that pervades all space and exists everywhere and in everything as the vehicle of life and sound.

The *Glossary* further states that the term "astral light" has been so indiscriminately used as to be synonymous with Akâsa and ether. Although called light, it is such as can only be perceived psychically. As the lowest aspect of Akâsa the astral light must likewise be regarded as an imponderable substance, or as one of the stratifications or phases of that tenuous medium or ether which interpenetrates every place and thing.

Among the ancients the recognition of such an etheric substance

is clearly to be seen. Hindû and Egyptian literature is replete with references thereto. Later we find it under the names of Azoth, Anima Mundi, etc., etc. It is this substance that is denominated by Hermes Trismegistus "The Great Telesma", who mystically says of it, "God created it first of all when he said 'Let there be Light.'"

This light or substance, which is called in Hebrew "Aour", is the "liquid and living gold" of the Hermetic Philosophy, while modern science in the latest of its kaleidoscopic aspects is compelled to postulate the existence of its ether to logically account for the most common-place phenomena. Without it, they tell us, there would be no vibratory medium through which the sun's rays must pass to reach the earth; and without it, adds the occultist, there would be no earth for them to reach. It is, then, from these two standpoints, those of science and Theosophy, that we may hope to gain some conception of the so-called astral light.

Says Mr. Judge in the last chapter of his *Echoes from the Orient*:

"Like all unfamiliar and occult things, the astral light is hard to define, especially so from the fact that it is called 'light'. It is not the light as we know it, neither is it darkness. Modern scientific investigators approach it when they speak of luminiferous ether and radiant matter. Distant sounds can be heard in it, heavy bodies levitated by it, odors carried thousands of miles through it, thought read in it, and all of the various phenomena by mediums brought about under its action. A definition to be accurate should include all the functions and powers of this light; but as those are not fully known to the mystic and are wholly *terra-incognita* to the scientists, we must be content with a partial analysis. It is an imponderable ether obeying the laws of attraction and repulsion. It vibrates to and fro, making itself now positive, now negative. This gives it a circular motion which is symbolized by the serpent. Cosmically speaking, it is the great final agent or prime-mover, which not only makes the plant grow but also keeps up the diastole and systole of the human heart. As an enormous screen or reflector, the astral light hangs over the earth and becomes a powerful universal hypnotizer of human beings. The pictures of all acts, good and bad, done by our ancestors as well as by ourselves, being ever present to our inner selves, we constantly are impressed by them by way of suggestion, and go then and do likewise. In each current of the astral light will be found a definite series of reflections, and they are taken up by the inner man who reports them through speech and action on this plane as though they were his own. It is further said of the astral light that it is capable of assuming extreme density when drawn in

around the body by powerful will or by abnormal bodily states, so that no physical force can penetrate it. The Hindû yogi gives evidence of a use of this condensation of the astral light when he allows arrows and other projectiles to be thrown at him, all of them falling at his feet, no matter how great their momentum. And the records of genuine spiritualistic phenomena in the United States furnish similar experiences."

There is also a useful function of this light, as it preserves the pictures of all past events and things; and as there is nothing new under the sun, the appliances, the ideas, the philosophy, the arts and sciences of long-buried civilizations are continually being projected in pictures out of the astral into the brains of living men. This gives meaning to oft-recurring coincidence of two or more inventors or scientists hitting upon the same ideas or inventions at about the same time and independently of each other.

Says the *Secret Doctrine*:

"The astral light is dual and bi-sexual; the (ideal) male part of it is purely divine and spiritual, it is the wisdom, it is the Spirit or Purusha, while the female portion is tainted in one sense with matter, is indeed matter and therefore evil already."

In *Transactions of Blavatsky Lodge No. 2* H. P. B. states that the astral light is "that which *mirrors* the three higher planes of consciousness, and is above the lower or terrestrial plane; therefore it does not extend beyond the fourth plane, where, one may say, the Akâsa begins. There is one great difference between the astral light and Akâsa which must be remembered: the latter is eternal, the former is periodic. The astral light changes not only with the Maha-manvantaras, but also with every sub-period and planetary cycle or round. The prototypes or ideas of things exist *first* on the plane of divine eternal consciousness, and thence become *reflected* and *reversed* in the astral light, which also *reflects* on its lower individual plane the life of our earth, recording it on its tablets. Therefore is the astral light called 'illusion'. It is from this that we in our turn get our prototypes: consequently, unless the clairvoyant or seer can get beyond this plane of illusion he can never see the truth, but will be drowned in an ocean of self-deception and hallucination."

In the attractive work by "Nizida" entitled *The Astral Light*, it is stated that "although belonging to the realm of soul, the astral light is nevertheless as substantial as the air we breathe, and may enter into the consideration of life with as fair a chance of being understood as any subject of study belonging to the realm of the body—the material plane. It is possible for certain well-ascertained facts relating to that next nearest stage of conscious, intel-

lignant existence to be set forth to the comprehension of all men in as logical and tangible a form as the facts of any other science wherein the most material mind will find a basis upon which to rest as solid as the earth itself."

To elucidate this view is the effort of the writer.

One of the most learned and scientific of modern inquirers into this fathomless region of the astral light was the late Abbé Constant, better known as Éliphas Lévi. From the writings of this erudite French mystic as translated by Mrs. Adele, F. T. S., and published in *The Path* of 1887 to 1889, we learn that "this primordial light, vehicle of all ideas, is the mother of all forms and transmits them from emanation to emanation, diminished or altered only by the density of the surroundings. The forms of objects, being modifications of this light, remain in the light, where they are reflected back: thus the astral light or terrestrial fluid is saturated with images or reflections of all kinds. These images are always before us, and are only temporarily obscured by the more obtrusive impressions of reality during waking hours, or by the preoccupation of our thoughts which renders our imagination inattentive to the shifting panorama of the astral light. When we are asleep they present themselves to us of their own accord, and thus dreams are produced; dreams which are vague and incoherent unless some *dominant wish remains active* during our sleep and gives, although unknown to us, a direction to the dream, which thus becomes a vision. The astral light acts directly upon the nerves which are its conductors in the physical economy and which convey it to the brain. Thus a somnambulist can see by the nerves without needing material light, the astral fluid containing *latent* light just as science recognizes latent heat."

The physical and intellectual feats of these somnambuli are too numerous and too well attested by scientists of all schools to necessitate further mention.

That the mesmeric or hypnotic operator can cause his subject to see or feel whatever he wills is also beyond dispute, and since the materialistic philosophy limits the cause of thought to molecular vibration of the brain, and since atmospheric air does not interpenetrate the physical brain, it would be interesting to learn just how this thought or vibratory action of the operator's brain can be transmitted to the brain of the subject by means of an atmospheric medium.

Postulating the ether as a transmitting medium, which science always does for want of something better, we should then like to know how it is that these thoughts or ideas of the operator can be conveyed to or impressed upon the subject at all, except in the

shape of words or—as Theosophy teaches—distinct forms or pictures, vibratory creations in the ether, or thought forms in the astral light. To know how very near the teachings of modern experimental science approach the teachings of Aryan science in this connection, we have but to refer to the well-recognized phenomena of producing specific forms and figures by means of sound or other vibratory motion. What student in this field has not seen the geometric figures produced by drawing a violin-bow across the edge of a glass plate covered with fine sand? It is barely two years ago that Mrs. Watts-Hughes, a London philanthropist and vocalist, attracted the attention of the scientific world by perfecting a simple instrument consisting mainly of a tube and sensitized plate, by means of which she was enabled to record in specific forms the faintest modulations of her phenomenal voice, producing at will the distinct outlines of various flora and other objects as perfect as the originals found in nature. (See *London Spectator*, Oct. 26, 1889; also *Century* for May, 1891.) So well recognized has this principle become that the equipment of modern schools of physics is considered incomplete without the "Lessajous" apparatus, an ingenious arrangement of the lens, looking-glass, tuning-fork, and screen to facilitate the optical study of sonorous vibrations.

Conceiving, then, molecular vibration to be the cause of thought, instead of its accompanying phenomenon—as taught in Theosophy, this same molecular vibration would, according to well-established laws, record itself in specific forms upon a sensitized substance if provided with a transmitting medium, the forms in question being governed by the vibratory ratio of the thought creating them; in other words, by the idea or the thought itself. The records of medical science clearly show that the heat of the brain, and consequently the rate of its molecular vibration, are altered and modified by the character of the thought or emotion, the heat being proportioned to the intensity of the emotion. Thus, without denying any established law of science, we would have the mesmerist creating a given form in thought, *i. e.*, by means of the molecular vibration of his brain. We have the ether—of science, if you will—as a transmitting medium, and the magnetized brain of the subject—interpenetrated by this ether—as a sensitized and resistant substance upon which the form so created can be sensed or recorded.

Says a recent writer on the subject, in a work entitled *Psychometry and Thought-Transference*: "For an impression to pass from one person to another, or from a picture to a person, we may assume from analogy (1) that there is some intervening medium

through which the impression can be transmitted. (2) That there is a force to give the momentum necessary to convey it from one point to another. (3) That there is an apparatus capable of registering the impression and converting it into terms of ordinary consciousness. Let us take the illustration of the electric telegraph: the battery gives the necessary force, the impression is transferred through the wire, and the instrument registers it. But it may be said in many of the recorded cases of thought-transference—the telepathic appearance of one to another at a distance, for instance—there is no wire to conduct the impression, so the analogy falls to the ground. Not so. For one of Edison's recent inventions applied to electrical science is an instrument by means of which a telegraphic message can be shot from one point to another—within certain limits of distance—with no more solid conducting medium for its transmission than is afforded by the atmosphere surrounding our globe. Furthermore, the possibility of numerous telepathic vibrations crossing in their transit without interfering with each other has a close analogy in electrical science. If electrical messages can cross in a cable without interfering with each other, why should not telepathic impulses betwixt persons on opposite sides of the globe? One phenomenon is not more remarkable than the other. So, if a certain kind of vibration corresponds to a certain thought or image in one man's mind, it can be reconverted into the same thought or image in the sensorium of another. This metathesis of thought is a natural process in transcendental chemistry, for the fundamental basis of all occult science is that there is but one essence, and that all things—concrete matter in its various manifestations, force, thought, and what is called Spirit, are but different forms of this cosmic *matter*, the difference consisting in the distance separating the molecules, and in their arrangement. We get glimpses of this law in the commonest phenomena of nature. The force which drives a locomotive engine is steam, the steam can be condensed into water, but it is still the same matter, the principal difference being that the molecules are closer together and move upon each other according to a different plan. The water can be frozen. The ice is still the same matter which manifested as steam or force, for steam is invisible to the eye, but its molecules have arranged themselves according to a mathematical plan in assuming a crystalline form. But this ice can again be converted into steam. So it is with thought, although it is less easy of demonstration."

Again the same writer states in referring to the properties of the astral fluid. As according to the hypothesis of scientists ether

can be thrown into vibration and in that form transmit the energies of light, heat, and electricity, so in like manner is the astral fluid capable of receiving, transmitting, and retaining impressions of manifold kinds. This fact is poetically illustrated by Prof. Draper where he speaks of ganglionic impressions on the surface of a polished metal being registered and preserved for an indefinite space of time. "A shadow," he says, "never falls upon a wall without leaving thereupon a permanent trace, a trace which might be made visible by resorting to proper processes. . . . The portraits of our friends, or landscape views, may be hidden from the eye on the sensitive surface, but they are ready to make their appearance as soon as proper developers are resorted to. A spectre is concealed on a silver or glassy surface, until by our necromancy we make it come forth into the visible world. . . . But beyond registering images we are told that the astral fluid registers every thought of man, so that it forms, as it were, the book of Nature, a history of the world and all its sciences and schools of thought."

"It seems," says Prof. Hitchcock in his *Religion of Geology*, while treating of the influences of light upon bodies and the formation of pictures upon them by means of it, "that this photographic influence pervades all nature, nor can we say where it stops. We do not know but it may imprint upon the world around us our features as they are modified by various passions, and thus fill nature with daguerreotype impressions of all our actions. . . . It may be, too, that there are tests by which Nature, more skilful than any photographer, can bring out and fix these portraits, so that acuter senses than ours shall see them, as on a great canvas spread over the material universe. Perhaps, too, they never fade from that canvas, but become specimens in the great picture-gallery of eternity."

But how, it is asked, can such a small particle of etheric matter hold such extensive images? How can every particle reflect every image?

Referring again to the work by "N. C." on psychometry and thought-transference, we find an easy illustration. "If," says the writer, "one holds a drop of quicksilver on a plate, the face is reflected in it (so are all the objects in the room); if the drop be split up into a thousand drops, each one reflects the face again. This may be carried on to infinity, each particle reflecting surrounding objects."

While this theory, as outlined by the above-mentioned writers, may be deficient in some details, it perhaps will serve to illustrate in this line of thought the close approach of the modern to the ancient science.

Babbage, and subsequently Jevons, have stated their conviction that every thought, displacing the particles of the brain and setting them in motion, scatters them through the universe, and that "each particle of the existing matter must be a register of all that has happened."

We may thus conceive how it is possible for the thought-created forms of men—by remaining in the ether or the astral light—to react themselves hypnotically upon the brains of their fellow-men.

When considering the incalculable influence these images exert over our own lives, and over those of others as viewed from the standpoint of Theosophy, it vitally concerns us that in creating them we should hold in mind the law of ethical causation, the Law of Karma, the inexorable law of cause and effect, and strive for the attainment of that stage of human evolution where the empire of the *will* holds full control of the tendencies of self. Such is the aim of the Theosophist.



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# THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: AMERICAN SECTION.

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## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

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### **The Relative Place and Importance of Action and Contemplation in the Theosophic Life.**

*[A Paper read before the Aryan T. S., New York City.]*

IT is by no means surprising that a question should have arisen in the minds of some Western Theosophists as to the real value and position of contemplation in the Theosophic life; nor is it unreasonable, considering the nature of Western civilization and mental training, that a certain prepossession should have shown itself for the active rather than the contemplative life. The very fact that most men in Western countries are compelled by force of circumstance to lead an active life, and in the same way are debarred the life of contemplation or meditation, undoubtedly tends to the establishment of a bias in favor of Action. What accords best with men's habits and necessities must inevitably present itself to their minds with special favor, while that which makes a demand on them for radical changes of habit and practice encounters from the first an opposition which is apt to be almost as much physical as mental. But in attempting to show the true relations and right uses of Action and of Contemplation, it is requisite that even the most natural prejudices and disinclinations should be, if not eliminated, at least held in abeyance. For the questions to be determined are of the first consequence, and may, without exaggeration, be said to go to the root of Theosophy as a system of thought, and as a guide to the right conduct of life.

The western Theosophist starts in his enquiry into Theosophic truth heavily handicapped, and this must be borne in mind con-

stantly. The civilization to which he belongs, and which both by heredity and education has become bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, is essentially materialistic. Its dominant tendencies—and perhaps to-day more than ever—are toward views of life which virtually exclude the spiritual. Its activities are almost wholly what is called "practical", and it finds in the satisfaction of purely intellectual needs the highest development of a system whose lower requirements are met by the gratification of the senses. The Theosophist who can live the life under these prevailing conditions is indeed a conqueror in no mean cause, and may well feel that victory against such tremendous odds is all that can be expected of him; is perhaps quite as much as poor humanity can ever accomplish. Such a success, indeed, signifies much; but the relative value of it is nevertheless below that of the highest forms of Contemplation, and if this were not true, and capable of demonstration, the cult of the wisdom-religion would be little better than a delusion. Let us, however, put before ourselves as clearly as possible the fact that neither Action nor Contemplation can be recommended or applied indiscriminately. For the sons of men are not born equal in any generation. Some are more advanced than others. Balzac, who in his great philosophical novels, "Louis Lambert" and "Seraphita", presented the Wisdom-Religion with surprising fulness and accuracy, merely giving it a new aspect by employing an unfamiliar terminology, drew the line clearly between those who are adapted to the active and those who are fitted for the contemplative life. But—and this is a point to be carefully noted—neither he nor any other writer or thinker who fully grasped the truths of Theosophy ever fell into the error of placing Action above Contemplation.

For how can the highest things to which the incarnated spirit is capable of attaining be put below the things which belong to that daily life which is so full of temptations, interruptions, intrusions of gross materialism, and influences antagonistic, nay, almost fatal, to spiritual exercise and development? Action is necessary in the majority of lives, no doubt. It is not only that it is necessary even to mere existence, but that the majority of men are incapable of proceeding farther. They might find in Action a free field for the employment of their best faculties, but it does not follow that Action affords the means of attaining fully to the higher life. As matter of fact it does not; and it is not in Asia alone that the superiority of contemplation has been realized. Here again the Western Theosophist, be he a Protestant, or of Protestant lineage, must encounter an obstacle; for to such an one the great storehouse of mystical theology, the keys of which are in possession of the Mother Church, is liable to appear in-

accessible. Not that it is really so. In modern times at least this treasury of experiences lies open to all who will take the trouble to examine it; and in it can be found the most pregnant suggestions and the most illuminative truths. For whoso studies mystical theology, whether in the lives of the Saints or in the doctrines of the Church, will speedily perceive that here at last he is brought close to the old Wisdom-Religion; that here, above and beyond all exoteric rites and ceremonies and concessions to the credulity, superstition, and ignorance of the masses, is the same reverence for Contemplation to be found in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and the *Upanishads* generally, and among the Aryan sages in the remotest antiquity.

Nay, more, even Hindû metaphysics, minute and laborious as are their ramifications, cannot surpass the ingenuity of the scholastic doctors who have systematized the mysteries of Contemplation, and have defined and analyzed each separate phase and state of the process. A careful study of the Abbé Migne's *Dictionnaire D'Ascètisme* will convince any reader that the men who have there treated of Mysticism had little to learn from the Orient upon the subject, and that if the final subject of mystical theology is given another name than that which Krishna commends to Arjuna as the proper object of Contemplation, it is not because there exists any real difference either in the process or its ultimate aim. Let us mark, further, that, as Schopenhauer observes, "all religions at their highest point pass over into mysticism and mysteries". Now it is necessary to realize the full significance of this fact, for a fact it undoubtedly is. Mysticism being the highest point that has been—we may say, that can be—reached by any religion, it follows necessarily that Mysticism marks the utmost attainable limit of the human soul in its reaching after the Divine. Atma and Paramatma here approach as closely as is possible under the existing conditions; and in the meditations, visions, inspirations, and revelations of mystics such as St. Francis of Assisi, St. Theresa, Madame Guyon, Fenelon, Saint Martin, Jacob Boehme, etc., are imperfectly set forth, not indeed the actual psychical experiences of those aspirants, but such fragments and outlines of their ineffable cognitions as they were able to bring back with them when they returned to the world of sense.

In mystical theology Contemplation is termed "Union with God". It matters not what name is used to denote the pure spirituality of the final process, for that process and its results are the same whether the contemplative addresses himself to the high quest in a European capital, on a wild frontier in America, upon the banks of the Ganges, or among the mountains of Thibet. Everywhere and always the result is the same. Everywhere and

always the emancipation from Matter, with all its impurities and spirit-paralyzing influences, is the end sought. Everywhere and always the right aspirant is rewarded by an experience too far removed from worldly things to be communicable; too elevating and exalting in its effect upon the subject not to make a deep and lasting impression upon the witnesses of his rapture. When Moses descended from the Mount the glory of his countenance, we are told, was such that no man might look upon it and live. He had been face to face with Jehovah. If we choose we may read the tradition to signify that he had been in Contemplation. For the Wisdom-Religion assuredly antedates the Pentateuch, and wherever that religion has been taught, its promulgators have insisted upon the superlative value, the supreme importance of Contemplation.

The *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* is good Theosophical authority, to say the least, and it declares that "Action is said to be the means by which the wise man who is desirous of mounting to meditation may reach thereto; so cessation from Action is said to be the means for him who hath reached to meditation. When he hath renounced all intentions and is devoid of attachment to action in regard to objects of sense, then he is called one who hath ascended to meditation." It is not and never has been asserted that such an attainment is easy, or that the maintenance of the exalted condition here outlined is not arduous. In effect the attainment and the maintenance are enormously difficult, even among those people whose habits of thought and life have for ages been preparing them for the accomplishment of psychical feats, and who have learned to cultivate the will-power as it has seldom or never been trained and cultivated in Europe. But the difficulty of the attainment is a question of secondary importance. The vital point is that, whether in the East or in the West, man has found in Contemplation the one avenue to assimilation with higher and spiritual life. It is true that there are differences in the methods and also in the inferences drawn. Thus the Hindû Mysticism in many respects, and these vital, stands above both the Christian and Mohammedan Mysticism. In the Wisdom-Religion, moreover, action is made a necessary preliminary to Contemplation. It is the means whereby the soul is trained and disciplined, and in due course enabled to enter into that exalted condition through which alone absolute assurance of the truth can be attained. In no other way can the higher forms of knowledge be reached. For though the ultimate state of Contemplation transcends reason and dispenses with it, carrying the aspirant above and beyond the barriers of sense which normally hedge in the incarnated spirit, there is another stage of

Contemplation in which reason continues to be employed, and by which the fullest and clearest understanding of all things capable of being grasped by the human intellect is rendered accessible. It is not, however, to be supposed that either of these states is within the reach of all men. Progress, whether material or spiritual, is conditioned upon strict obedience to law. Nature never proceeds by leaps and bounds. Her mutations and transformations are amazing, but they are wrought by degrees, and systematically. The too impatient student of Theosophy is doomed to disappointment if he imagines that the reward of higher knowledge, and still more of the highest spiritual exaltation, can be enjoyed before it has been earned; and to earn it at all the desire of possession must first have been conquered and eliminated. Yet this truth need not discourage any earnest seeker. He who has learned the first principles of the Wisdom-Religion knows that a single incarnation plays but an insignificant part in the experience of any Ego; that there is ample time for the development of that deep yearning after the higher life which must be energized into a steady glow before even the first steps toward renunciation are possible; that the Path once entered with a firm foot and resolute heart, help from without may come to the toiler; and that no matter how long and laborious the quest may prove, ultimate success will compensate for all the suffering and self-denial endured.

To put Action before or on a level with Contemplation, as some thinkers appear inclined to do, is equivalent to valuing the path above the goal. It is as though a Christian should hold the living of a pious life to be the only end deserving attention. But it is, in Theosophy, very much less reasonable than that, for, as the *Bhagavad-Gitā* declares, "Action is the means whereby the wise man who is desirous of mounting to meditation may reach thereto." It is in effect simply the ladder upon whose rungs the aspirant must climb to that higher life which is the one worthy aim of spiritual energy. To live the life is indeed not to despise or to undervalue Action, which, as heretofore observed, must for a long time bound the upward capacity of the majority. These, however anxious and eager to advance, are so fettered by their Karma that their utmost efforts can only attain to the purification and strengthening that discipline brings. No iota of such discipline should be lightly regarded, nor should it ever be thought that it is in vain, no matter how difficult it be to recognize the fruits of it. For those fruits grow and ripen slowly, and it is always possible and often probable that they will not appear in the present incarnation. In some other they will, however, certainly carry forward the soul that planted the good seed, and this should satisfy

the true Theosophist, and nerve him to continued effort in the present. Let him devote himself to making good Karma here and now and his future progress will be both the swifter and the less painful. Let him above all fix his mind upon the higher aims of the Wisdom-Religion, and let him realize that through Contemplation alone are these to be compassed.

Critics have often complained of the "obscurity" of mystical writers, and the circumstances are such that it is impossible to deal with the conditions of the highest forms of spiritual experience without becoming liable to this reproach. It is not, indeed, well-founded, and it may be shown to be quite unreasonable, for nothing is clearer than that a new science requires a new terminology. No one would think of complaining that the higher mathematics were "obscure" simply because he could not understand them. Every sane person realizes that preliminary instruction is necessary to apprehension in this case. How much more necessary must such preparation be, however, when the subjects to be treated have no analogues in ordinary life and every-day experience; when existences and occurrences are to be dealt with which have no relations to time or space, and are beyond measurement by the senses. If the Mystics appear obscure to lay readers it is chiefly because one has to transpose the things of Spirit into terms of Matter; it is also because mystical experiences consist largely in absolutely incommunicable preceptions and intuitions. Therefore is it that the most precious and noble parts of Mysticism are of necessity veiled. The finite may perceive the infinite under conceivable circumstances, but never can comprehend or describe it.

And this is why the age-long controversy as to the meaning and nature of Nirvana has proceeded without conclusion. Men find it hard to admit that there can be any form of existence transcending their power of comprehension. Yet physical science might convince them that the limits of the human organism are strictly defined, and its capacities circumscribed. The phenomena of Light, for example, afford a striking illustration of these limitations. Human vision ceases to be effective at the violet ray; not because there are not, or may not be, other rays, but because the vibrations at that point become too swift to leave any impression upon the retina. As a matter of fact man can himself make instruments which far exceed his own eyes both in power and in discrimination. The microscope can surpass Nature, and demonstrates the existence of numberless things and beings which to the unassisted vision are invisible. The man of science is prepared to accept such evidence, because the facts are familiar to him; but he will not, by parity of reasoning, acknowledge the possibility

that even the scientific imagination may be bounded, and that forms and states of existence beyond human analysis and human power of description may be found in the Unseen Universe. Nevertheless science has dreams and visions which in their daring and scope might almost seem to rival the metaphysical creations of the Hindus. The idea of an universal primal substance cannot, indeed, be claimed by or for any modern thinker. It is as old as the Wisdom-Religion, and it has been put forward again and again by the philosophers of Greece and Alexandria. Modern ignorance scoffed at it in the shape it took under Bishop Berkeley's cogitations; but it has once more come to the front, and is making steady headway at present. And what stupendous implications does this doctrine require. From the amoeba to a beautiful woman; from the fragile pine-nut to the majestic iron-clad; from the spider's web to the mass of the Alps or the Andes—all and everything must be traced to a single source—a single substance.

In truth the mysteries which surround us are no whit more soluble than those which lie beyond our ken; but before any real advance can be made in the spirituality of the world the sages of science must at least be brought to admit that materialism neither explains nor adumbrates an explanation of the phenomena hourly under our eyes, and the processes of nature by which life is begun, maintained, and continued. To the Theosophist who is a faithful student the mystery of Nirvana, though it remain a mystery, is wholly thinkable. That is to say, he perceives and realizes that even the most apparently contradictory statements concerning the state are entirely in accord with what he holds to be the truth. "If," observes the German philosopher, miscalled of Pessimism—"If Nirvana is defined as nothing, this only means that the Samsara, or this world, contains no single element which could assist the definition or construction of Nirvana." This is true, and the same line of reasoning applies to all the objections raised against mysticism, or contemplation, because of the difficulty, for unprepared minds, of understanding the nature and character of its effects and products. This difficulty of comprehension, however, is liable to have mischievous consequences for such as are misled into supposing that the best fruits of contemplation may be obtained by ceremonial practice, without other preparation. This mistake is obviously akin to that of the Pharisees of old, and unhappily it is one to which human frailty lends itself but too easily.

A paper written by Damodar K. Mavalankar some years ago has some remarks on this point so pertinent and seasonable that a citation from it may be welcomed. The learned occultist observes on contemplation: "A general misconception on this subject seems

to prevail. One confines himself for some time in a room, and passively gazes at one's nose, a spot on the wall, or, perhaps, a crystal, under the impression that such is the true form of the contemplation enjoined by Raj Yoga. Many fail to realize that true occultism requires a physical, mental, moral, and spiritual development to run on parallel lines, and injure themselves, physically and spiritually, by practice of what they falsely believe to be Dhyan." Here the writer gives some specific instances which had fallen under his own observation, in one of which the rash experimenter found, after some months of practice, "that he was no longer his own master". 'The man who ignorantly and without preparation "rushes into contemplation, dashes himself to pieces on the rocks dividing the known from the unknown. Wallowing in the mire of exotericism, he knows not what it is to live in the world and yet be not of the world; in other words, to guard *self* against *self* is an almost incomprehensible axiom for the profane". And again Damodar says: "Raj Yoga encourages no sham, requires no physical postures. It has to deal with the inner man, whose sphere lies in the world of thought. To have the highest ideal placed before oneself and strive incessantly to rise up to it, is the only true concentration recognized by Esoteric Philosophy, which deals with the inner world of *noumena*, not the outer shell of *phenomena*. The first requisite for it is thorough purity of heart. Well might the student of occultism say with Zoroaster that purity of thought, purity of word, and purity of deed,—these are the essentials of one who would rise above the ordinary level and join the 'gods'. A cultivation of the feeling of unselfish philanthropy is the path which has to be traversed for that purpose. For it is that alone which will lead to Universal Love, the realization of which constitutes the progress towards deliverance from the chains forged by Maya around Ego."

These are weighty observations, and whosoever inclines toward the practice of the external ceremonies which are associated with contemplation, will do well to take them to heart and pause to ascertain how far his preparation extends. The earnest Theosophist, it is to be hoped, will need no such warnings and cautions. He must long since have realized that contemplation, being the highest mode of occult research and revelation, cannot be approached in a perfunctory manner with impunity. In many myths the rash intruder upon sacred mysteries was blasted by the anger of the god whose sanctuary he had violated. These myths symbolized a serious fact, and were not mere inventions of fancy. There is no royal road to the ultimate truths of the Wisdom-Religion. They are attainable only by those who are capable of

receiving them, and those who are capable of receiving them must have passed through the discipline of action, following the four-fold Path, and thus rising by degrees from the clinging hold of Matter towards the pure atmosphere of Spirit. They must, as Damodar says, have lived in the world without being of it. They must, to the extent of their ability, have followed the example of Gotama Buddha in his great renunciation. And if their progress has been such as to enable them to sustain the ordeal to the end, they may be admitted to that state of contemplation in which the Sage achieved his final deliverance, and may exclaim with him:

"Many a house of Life  
Hath held me—seeking ever him who wrought  
These prisons of the senses, sorrow fraught;  
Sore was my ceaseless strife!"

But now,  
Thou Builder of this Tabernacle,—Thou!  
I know Thee! Never shalt thou build again  
These walls of pain,  
Nor raise the roof-tree of deceits, nor lay  
Fresh rafters on the clay;  
Broken thy house is, and the ridge-pole split!  
Delusion fashioned it!  
Safe pass I thence,—Deliverance to obtain."

In the *Bhagavad-Gītā* Krishna, instructing Arjuna on the right conduct of life, tells him to "let the motive for action be in the action itself, and not in the event." "Do not", the divine monitor proceeds, "be incited to actions by the hope of their reward, nor let thy life be spent in inaction. Firmly persisting in Yoga, perform thy duty, and laying aside all desire for any benefit to thyself from action, make the event equal to thee, whether it be success or failure." Then he adds: "Yet the performance of works is by far inferior to mental devotion, O despiser of wealth. Seek an asylum, then, in this mental devotion, which is knowledge". Mental devotion here signifies contemplation or meditation, in the sense in which the terms have been employed in this paper. In other parts of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* Krishna expresses similar views as to the supreme importance of contemplation, the position of which in the *Upanishads* generally is in no way open to doubt or misconception. It has been shown already that this is the case in all religions, and that it has always been so. Starting from separate points, and seeking new ends, they have all been compelled into the line first laid down in the Wisdom-Religion, and, what is most impressive and significant, they have all attained unity of results in the final development of psychic cultivation. Nor can this remarkable harmony be concealed by the slight

differences of embellishment and of detail which must be ascribed to different methods of education and civilization in the mystics themselves. These latter are men, each with personalities and idiosyncrasies. They impart a certain local color to all their experiences, as all men do to the commonest events. No two witnesses are ever agreed, for men see differently and apprehend with varying degrees of intelligence. So with those who have ascended to the highest spiritual plane that can be reached in the flesh. But in essentials their reports harmonize so closely that this agreement may be said to constitute one of the strongest evidences of the truth of them—for those who have been trained to put reason before intuition.

It appears, then, that the relative place and importance of action and contemplation in the Theosophic life may be ascertained and assigned without much difficulty by a candid and unprejudiced enquiry. Both are necessary, and both, when rightly used, tend to spiritual progress. But contemplation is the highest, and this is why it has crowned every religion, and lifted it, at the point of its freest development, into a majesty and glory which impress us even across the ages, and compel us to exclaim—"Surely the truth must have been here, also!" The Theosophist above all men should pay respect to action, and estimate it at its full value as a great means to a greater end. But it is not more than a means, and the Theosophic life, to be round and complete, must rest finally upon the hope and expectation of sharing the priceless knowledge and the sublime spiritual experience which contemplation opens the way to. For this is the highest and best, and

"We needs must love the highest when we see it."

Paper No. 24.

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## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

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### **Earth an Academy.**

*[Read before the "H. P. B." T. S. by Alexander Fullerton.]*

If one of us was opening a new school, he would probably address the pupils somewhat on this wise: "I much wish you, my boys, to thoroughly understand the principles upon which this school will be conducted. You are here for two purposes,—to gain knowledge from books and oral instruction, and to form habits of courtesy and right dealing through association with each other. A careful record will be kept of each one's progress, and as he exhausts the studies of a lower class and shows his fitness for a higher, he will be promoted to it. But observe that fitness will be the only ground for promotion. There will be no favoritism in grading or advance: the record will not express any preference by me for one above another, but will be a simple transcript of what each does and is. Intercession of family or friends will have no influence; sickness, though excusing from blame, cannot be used as reason to give a promotion that has not been earned; deficiency in any one essential branch will exclude from entering the higher class wherein the deficient boy could not anyhow maintain himself. I wish you to advance as rapidly as your powers will permit, and I shall always be ready to give proper encouragement and help; but remember that merit, and merit only, is to determine promotion, strict justice, and strict justice only, to be the rule for gauging that merit. The work depends upon yourselves; only the right award to it depends on me."

I think that any boy would at once perceive the thorough fair-

ness of such a platform, and that any auditor would entirely commend it as expressing the true principles upon which an educational institution should be carried on. But did it ever occur to you that this is precisely the rule by which the progress of ourselves, adults in the larger school of life, is unflinchingly regulated? You may say, indeed, that no such formal, distinct address is made to us upon entering, and that the human race has never been vouchsafed a verbal proclamation of the Divine economy. But are you sure of this? It is doubtless true that we do not now receive separately or collectively this notice of the law of life, yet may it not be that Almighty God, in the earlier days of humanity, millions of years ago, communicated it distinctly to our progenitors, and that tradition, and conscience, and the ceaseless outcropping of the ideas of Karma and Reincarnation are traces of a primeval utterance? But whether this be so or not, the analogy otherwise is good, and the principle of such a school and the principle of this our life are the same. Suppose we look into them.

A school-boy is learning two things,—facts and deportment. So with us. Whatever may be our occupation in life, we are brought in touch with some division of Nature and made to feel its processes and laws. The farmer learns the nature of soils and the modes of agriculture and stock-raising; the mariner observes currents and winds and storms, and understands the barometer and the compass; the banker studies financial movements and their laws; the sociologist those of society. No man, however removed from manual toil, is removed from contact with *some* facts in Nature, for we are all in and a part of her. And we are all related to each other, atoms forever touching other atoms in the great organism, catching and communicating magnetic influences, always moulding and being moulded. Life teaches us human nature, to understand our kind, to perceive the subtle motions of thought and sentiment and desire, gives us experience of men and of ourselves. And it is through this daily contact that we slowly come to perceive the exactions of a true life, that is, the forbearance, tolerance, strict respect for others' liberties and rights, without which the close association of men in a community would make it a ceaseless warfare. Very gradually forms the conviction that defiance of others means ostracism of oneself, that to receive fair treatment we must give it, that the solidarity of mankind is not a sentiment but a fact. The more completely we obliterate the notion that we are different from our fellows or to gain our ends by any methods not equally proper for them, the more completely we are in harmony with Nature and rest safely in her maternal bosom.

To learn what are the facts around us and how we are to behave to others is, then, the reason for our being in life's school.

When the school-boy's day is done, his books are put away, his comrades are forsaken, and he goes to his home for rest and sleep. Exactly so with us. The task of an incarnation over, fulfilled or not fulfilled as the case may be, the kind summoner to repose whom we so mistakenly shudder at and call Death closes our books for us, lays his hand gently on the pains and sorrows which have marred our life, and calms us for the rest in Devachan. In the beautiful words of St. John, which it is said that the poet Burns could never read without emotion, "God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes", and through that Devachanic era every grief is absent, and the disembodied spirit enjoys unmixed felicity till the day-dawn of another incarnation. Rested and refreshed, the Ego returns to earth, introduced to the next stage of his progressive experiences.

The school-boy is promoted to a higher class just as he has fitted himself for it. Even so in our case. Each incarnation has precisely the superior quality which the preceding one has earned. If the study and the deportment have been faithful, we do not needlessly repeat them, but are advanced to that station here wherein come the next higher truths and the next higher disciplines. This advance is not necessarily in wealth or ease, for mere physical luxury would be a poor reward for a sincere student: it may not be in rank or influence, for these might not further his inner development. Rather is it, one may say, in the suitability of his condition and environment to help him in his great aim—the larger life. Just what these should be in any particular case, who can tell? Not knowing the history of past incarnations, not knowing their degree of merit or defect, not even knowing the subtle influences which that condition and that environment must have upon the man subjected to them, we are unable to map out character upon the lines of circumstance. All we can say is that no character is too intricate for the pervasion of a Law which has no limit and no check, and that situation is an effect, never an accident. If a lot in life is demonstrably good, the preceding career must have been good, but we must not make the goodness of a lot to consist in mere physical benefits.

A school-boy's promotion is not in any way determined by favoritism. Neither is ours. In the vast training-school of the Universe there are no chosen peoples or races or individuals, no capricious selections for unwarranted favors, no blessings or punishments for any other reason than desert. An arbitrariness which would be intolerable in the Principal of an Academy would

be atrocious in Almighty God. Most happily we need be under no apprehensions of it. The Perfect Justice we all extol, but which so many religionists deny in their creeds, really exists, and in the thoroughness of our belief in it comes our peace. As that belief solidifies and that peace expands, we cease to desire a favoritism they confute. We do not importune the Supreme Being to grant to ourselves or others favors to which we have no right, and, in doing so, to deprive of them those who have the right; but drop from our devotional exercises prayers which are discreditable to our sense of justice, and which will never be listened to by the One who has that sense in its perfection. Thoroughly sure that the scales are held by a hand both firm and true, we lose the expectation, and in time the wish, that it should ever waver or prove false.

A school-boy has always his teacher for a help. How very true this is of us! The nature of the Supreme Being and the laws of the spiritual world show that aspiration is never fruitless. The Infinite Spirit, so close to, so much a part of us, could we only realize it, is ever ready to impart instant strength and solace and support. That we are not empowered to ask unearned favors of It does not disprove our privilege to invoke its larger presence, its fuller rule, its richer aid, for these are not selfish possessions obtained through greed, but the evidence of growing unselfishness, of heartier reliance on the Universal Life. For the superior to help the inferior with stimulus and counsel and moral strength is but to fulfil the expansive essence of its own being. This would be a sorry world if it could have no relations to its Head. Theosophists do not so regard it, but see in anything which thwarts the free intercourse of spirit with spirit an intrusion of a lower, a disorderly element.

As the doctrines of Theosophy, however old as humanity, are new to our particular section of it, we have all, probably without exception, been habituated to consider this little life of ours, often short and never satisfactory, as the narrow strip to be crossed from non-existence to eternal existence. The infant of a few weeks and the man of ninety pass across it once and for all, then enter an unmortal region where in some strange way the experiences which can only come through a material world are miraculously supplied. The hideous miseries of a New York slum and the princely luxury of a 5th. Avenue palace; the agonies of long disease and the sunny joy of robust health; the foul degradation of the lowest criminal and the lofty conscientiousness of the refined moralist; the mean brutality of the purely selfish trickster and the

generous love of the self-sacrificing philanthropist; the unscrupulous rapacity of the demagogue who preys upon the people and the high-minded effort of the publicist who labors for them; comfort, station, intelligence, character;—all have no meaning except that there is a whimsical Deity who sits above and distributes human lot upon no principle but from mere choice. The clay is in the hands of the potter, and, having no volition and no power to resist, is broken capriciously to bits, or fashioned into vessels of dishonor, or gilded sumptuously, as the potter may decide. There has been no past to influence him, and anyhow we are not to inquire into his motives. If we had never heard of such a theory of earth's conditions, and if it was gravely presented to us for the first time, I fancy that we should vacillate between ridicule and contempt. Should we visit a school where study and good behavior were avowed to have nothing to do with the status of the pupils, where classes and rewards and punishments were arranged without the slightest reference to merit, where a proficient in Greek was made to spend his time in entertaining the youngest children and a boy who could barely read made Assistant Teacher of Geometry, we should say that the Principal was a lunatic and his school a monstrosity. If any one responded, "Oh, but you must consider his motives!", we should probably reply, "But he doesn't seem to have any. Chaos and absurdity and injustice are not good grounds for postulating a high purpose. We have to infer character from acts. A tree is known by its fruit".

In the name of all that is rational and fair and intelligent, how can we deal differently with the problem of human life! The theory of an arbitrary Creator does not revolt men, only because they have refrained from examining it. The moment they give it thought, its gross absurdities, its frightful injustice, its deep irreverence are disclosed; and the more they ponder on it the more they see that, as an explanation of things on earth, it is not merely faulty, it is preposterous. If there is any explanation at all of such things, it must be that they have come about because they were deserved.

And this is precisely what Theosophy affirms. It states that the Supreme Being has impressed His own nature upon the world He has formed, and that the great law called "Karma" ensures to every one of the human family the just result of his own deeds. What I sow I reap. If I am poor or ignorant or sickly or degraded, I am so because such is the consequence of my own doing. If I am prosperous, educated, strong, high of purpose, I am so because I earned that status when here before. It is not chance or Providence, it is desert. Back of this present life was a long

series of prior lives: their outcome I am now experiencing. It may not be all I could wish; it may have irksome drawbacks, even bitter sorrows; it may lack opportunities very precious and joys very palatable; it may be cramped and fettered and unwholesome; still, it is what is my due. Nobody else is to blame; fate, destiny, doom—any word you please—only shirks the fact; I have what I have because I am what I am. And so of my neighbor. The Law is no respecter of persons, and through the whole range of humanity—yes, and of spheres above humanity—sweeps with its inflexible, resistless might. Karma rules throughout.

When an intelligent man dislodges from his mind the old conception of a whimsical God displaying his whims, and substitutes for it the still older conception of a just God manifesting justice, the world of things and men becomes transformed. All sorts of questions which he hid away because irreverent or tossed away because hopeless now find satisfactory solution. The universe is not a chaos, it is a cosmos. It is complicated, of course, and no finite mind will ever map out all its intricacies and subtleties, but the explanation of its moral bearings is in his hands, and the extent of the application is determined only by his industry and acumen. There is no dead wall of "inscrutable purpose" closing his path; he is not told that he must stop at any point because to go further would excite resentment or jealousy: the whole era of investigation is thrown unrestrictedly open, and he is invited to traverse it fearlessly, assured that every successive step will vindicate Wisdom and incite to Energy. Why are things not different? Because men are not different. Why are there pain and sorrow and loss? Because men have incurred pain and sorrow and loss. Why are not the pupils in this great training-school further advanced? Because they have been idle or careless or ill-behaved. When will they be promoted to a higher class? Just as soon as they become fit for it.

And here you see the tremendous moral strength which the doctrine of Karma gives to the sincere. Once and for all the notion of arbitrariness has been effaced, and the sincere man realizes that he determines his own destiny and shapes his own future. It is a very simple matter. If you want wheat, sow it. If you want advance, work for it. If you want happiness, live up to the law which ensures it. Do not suppose that low tastes or slothful habits or perverted thoughts will eventuate in fine character, lofty aims, or a prosperous reincarnation. Why should they, any more than that a noble life should bring about a degraded future? In our inner being, our personal ways, our relations to men around, is the field for determined culture. Little by little, as each pre-

sent duty is performed, there comes a readiness for the next; the character is being trained to instinctive, habitual good; impulses inconsonant with the finer life are dying down in weakness. The larger views of existence which Theosophy holds forth begin to expand the nature; it will not be content with the petty and the restricted and the mean. It must have scope, sunlight, power. It is on the upward way. Then comes Death, not a merciless tyrant cutting short the one probation and sending the half-prepared soul into a region yet unfitted for it, but the kindly friend who calls to the rest so needed before the next stage of the journey. When that rest is over, its processes all completed and its ends met, there opens up the new incarnation. Where? What? In the place which is meet, the surroundings which are just. The pupil is about to receive the advancement he has earned. For centuries perhaps, the exact spot has been slowly forming for his reception, numberless forces cooperating to prepare for him an environment expressive of his desert. And as he enters it, not remembering, indeed, where he was before or knowing why things are so, he yet carries with him the old character which was, which is, himself. Once more the strengthened powers are put forth for the same aims, this time with better opportunity and fewer checks, and again the being mounts upon the path. Again come the night of rest and the day of action, and so in many sequences goes on the evolution of character and of award. Where is it to stop? Why should it *ever* stop, since the being is immortal and his aim the Infinite?



# THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: AMERICAN SECTION.

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### The Founding of the Theosophical Society—Its Motive and Method.

*[Read at the Cincinnati T. S., by Dr. J. D. Buck.]*

THE present Theosophical movement is steadily gaining the attention and holding the interest of the civilized people of every quarter of the globe. From farther India to the Pacific Slope; from Sweden to New Zealand; in London, New York, and San Francisco the Theosophical doctrines are making rapid headway. It is not a question of converts and members, but solely a question of intelligent examination and apprehension. The present age is called by the readers of cycles who count from records of thousands of millenniums "Kali-Yuga", the dark cycle, when selfishness rules the world, and when mammon-worship and materialism threaten to engulf the human race. No one at all intelligent regarding the elements of the social problems involved and the philosophy of human history will expect a rapid or complete revulsion in that self-seeking that separates mankind into classes, and that brings face to face the favored few and the hungry, scowling proletariat, with animosities and divided interests. Whenever such conditions have existed in the past they have worked on to catastrophe, and the momentum of the present reign of mammon and selfishness which is the product of many generations of self-seekers cannot be arrested in one generation. No remedy suggested prior to the origin of the present Theosophical movement can pretend to strike at the root of the social malady. All else is at best palliative and com-

promise, and can, at best, hope only to defer the threatened danger. The disease must run its course, will run its course, but when its fury is past, when the coming crises have culminated and passed, the future weal of man will be in sore need of elements upon which to build the structure of future societies. The real Brotherhood of Man, which may not be generally recognized now, may spring from the seed sown now, and take form and beneficent impulse from the nucleus planted by the T. S. This movement, now thoroughly inaugurated, may therefore grow apace with the growing materialism, and find lodgment, year after year, and generation after generation, in the hearts, the consciousness, and the understanding of the unselfish and the benevolent, so that in the future, as in the past, these benefactors of man shall prove the saviours of society. With the religious systems of the world breaking into disjointed fragments, and the rush after the good things of this world by "churchman" and "sinner" alike, whipped on by the slogan of science, "the survival of the fittest"; mankind, bewildered in spiritual things by illogical and contentious theologies, and ignorant of its own high origin, spiritual nature, and destiny, is in danger of adopting the creed of the sensualist—"Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die."

The present Theosophical Society was organized in New York City in 1875, in the rooms of H. P. Blavatsky in Irving Place. Subsequent events and the entire history of the movement since that time have shown that Madame Blavatsky, and she only, recognized at that early day the needs of the hour, the nature of the movement then and there inaugurated, the methods to be employed, the difficulties to be encountered, and the immense resources and incomprehensible power back of the movement. Had she at that time revealed her knowledge on all these heads, no one at all familiar with the subsequent current of events would imagine for one moment that she would have been believed. She had first to open up to the Western World the resources of Eastern philosophy and the treasures of ancient wisdom, to collect evidence, elaborate and illustrate principles, furnish references, and so fortify her position and justify her mission to the world. Had she aroused in the early history of the Society that intense hatred and ignorant misrepresentation which followed her from the first and so often culminated in special outbursts of hostile rage, by premature revelation of her mission, no one can doubt that the T. S. would have been strangled in its cradle by the traditional serpent always hostile to new revelation. She had first to create a new literature; so new as to be incomprehensible to the West; so old as to have been almost forgotten in the East, the

cradle of all religions, philosophies, and sciences. I say *almost* forgotten. There still lingered in the far East the old traditions of intellectual greatness and a glorious past. The sacred books of the East, then fast falling into neglect and obscured by glyph and symbol in which they were cast, were brought prominently forward. The youth of India were appealed to in the name of their mighty ancestors, Sanscrit schools were established all over India and Ceylon. This was the mission undertaken by H. P. Blavatsky and Col. Olcott. Leaving *Isis Unveiled* to the Western World, they undertook to fan into a fresher life the smouldering embers of departed greatness. How well they succeeded in their appointed task has been attested by many a native prince and pundit, no less than by the records of the Society itself, with its Branches and Sanskrit schools scattered all over India, and by the rejuvenescence of her national life. History will record no greater enterprise, no grander achievement than this, undertaken without apparent resources and carried on in the face of detraction and persecution.

The movement in America seemed to have collapsed after the departure of Blavatsky and Olcott for India. Mr. W. Q. Judge, who was in the movement from the first, and the Secretary of the Society in New York, soon followed Blavatsky and Olcott to India, where, however, he remained but a few months. In the meantime the new doctrines were slowly winning their way through the interest created by *Isis Unveiled* and the efforts of hardly a dozen zealous students. On the return of Mr. Judge to New York, an effort was put forth to bring the Society into shape and give it a new life. The difficulties that were encountered and the obstacles that had to be overcome were very great. Individuals bent on exploiting the movement for personal notoriety, and who were determined to rule or ruin, had to be encountered. The public press, always eager for a scandal or a new sensation, was brought against the movement by these individuals claiming to speak with authority, and who hesitated at nothing in order to accomplish their personal ends. No greater evidence of the justice of a cause and the vitality of a movement need be given than the fact that the Society has been able to withstand all such attacks from foes without and foes within, and that it has steadily advanced in the face of all opposition. It might seem strange that a society based upon pure altruism, and inculcating unselfish work for humanity as the very basis of organization and effort, should be a temptation to the mountebank, and that such persons should attempt to exploit the society for personal notoriety. This, however, is one of the oldest traditions. If there were no genuine coins there would never be any counterfeits. In spite of intellectual

progress and scientific advancement the present age is almost a blank in regard to real spiritual knowledge. This knowledge is not only that which the age most needs, not only is this need appreciated by the best individuals in every community, but this knowledge is one of the very things which the Theosophical doctrines are competent to furnish, and as the great majority of persons, even among the otherwise intelligent, are ignorant of the very existence of such knowledge, the intellectual and ethically unscrupulous find it an easy matter to counterfeit the Theosophical doctrines and gain credit with the ignorant and unwary, and this has again and again been done, and when expulsion from the Society has promptly followed, a broadside of vile abuse of the Society has resulted. This might seem to raise at once the question of "orthodox Theosophy". But with those who have carefully watched the movement, and thoroughly and intelligently examined its literature, not the least difficulty is presented. No genuine Initiate, Master, or Mahâtmâ will ever seek to gain credit by reason of his advanced knowledge, but will forever hide himself behind his work. Therefore an individual is to be distrusted in proportion to his claim of knowledge and power. He, therefore, who undertakes to exploit the truth for a consideration, be that consideration money, fame, or power, labels his goods so that only the ignorant can be deceived thereby. Furthermore it has been stated and often reiterated by the leaders of the Society that no doctrine gains any weight through any pretended authority, no matter what that authority may be. Hence every so-called doctrine has been put forth as a philosophical or metaphysical proposition binding upon no member of the Society, and to be justified only by the willing and logical assent of each individual. The only exception to this statement is the acceptance of the principle of Universal Brotherhood, without which no really mutual association could long exist. While, therefore, the leaders of the T. S. have thus far prevented others from exploiting the Theosophical name and doctrines for personal ends, they have from the first refused to dogmatize in any way themselves. The fact that they have formulated no creed and pronounced no single doctrine as orthodox has made it difficult for the superficial student to make out just what Theosophy really means. This leaves every student, as every member of the Society, free to express and explain the doctrines in his own way. Such a course might seem to lead inevitably to confusion. Yet such is not the case. We have only to remember to what confusion the formulated creeds of Christendom have come, in order to realize that nothing is to be hoped for in the direction opposite to that pursued by the Society.

Theosophy first and foremost inculcates the principle and the necessity of personal reformation, to the end that character, not creed, shall govern individual life. It points out the innate selfishness of man as the mainspring of his life in the world, and shows how selfishness coupled with ignorance of his own spiritual nature leads him into trouble, and hedges him about with sorrow, sin, and death. This innate selfishness is to be replaced by altruism—genuine consideration for others—and the desire and the constant effort to ameliorate the condition of man everywhere. It is furthermore shown that no real progress in spiritual knowledge can take place except with this spirit of altruism as a basis of conduct and of life. Between such teachings as these and the mere intellectual grasp of a creed or a doctrine; there is the space of the antipodes, and it may thus be seen how difficult it would be to deceive anyone well grounded in such teachings and already undertaking personal reformation on these lines, by false coinage exploited for selfish and personal ends. The lion's skin can never quite conceal the ass's ears. Here lies the reason why, with all the pretended exposures and malicious attacks on the Society and its leaders, hardly a single member has ever resigned. The few who have done so needed only an excuse, and would have found it elsewhere if not there. The very first thing a Theosophist has to do is to take counsel with his own conscience and be honest with himself. If he resolves to reform his own life and to advance into spiritual light and knowledge, and so to enter into his divine birthright, he will begin with his besetting sins, and will find selfishness to be the root and foundation of all of them. Tried by these standards H. P. Blavatsky, Col. Olcott and William Q. Judge, and Mrs. Besant and other leaders are not found wanting. They have surrendered self and placed all they have and are on the altar of truth and humanity. When it is once really apprehended what two of these leaders accomplished in India and Ceylon in a single decade, one can hardly question their motive or deny their mission.

Coming now to the motive of the Society, its three objects so often and so plainly declared are familiar to all of us.

The first object, *viz.*, to found a *nucleus* of a Universal Brotherhood of Man without distinction of race, caste, sex, creed, or color, has already been realized. The nucleus has been formed. What the life shall be that shall flow from the nucleus, depends upon each member of the T. S.

The second and third objects, *viz.*, the study of ancient religions, philosophy, and sciences, and the unfolding of the psychical powers latent in man, have been largely facilitated by the literature of the

Society, which has grown to very large proportions during the past seventeen years. This literature consists, in part, of a revival and collation of ancient learning, and of the gathering of ancient records, obscure hints, and unknown symbols from many sources, both ancient and modern, so that it is now available to students who care to pursue it. Commentaries and explanations constitute the great bulk of the remainder of the Theosophic literature. These records and commentaries cover almost the entire range of human knowledge so far as it relates to man, and the departments of religion, philosophy, and science which may be made to include his entire knowledge of himself and of nature.

In brief, then, the present T. S. has established a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood and created a literature of its own. Had these conditions already existed when the Society was first organized in 1875, the subsequent labors of the Society for the past seventeen years might have covered very different ground. These doctrines, which had to make headway against all sorts of ignorance and opposition, are just beginning to obtain a hearing, and to be judged by their own intrinsic merit. No intelligent Theosophist ever desires to press them upon unwilling auditors. The Society does, however, desire to keep them alive and as free as possible from creed and dogmatism, and to place them within reach of everyone who is prepared and willing to examine them.

The traditions of the existence of that body of Adepts or Mahâtmâs is very old. It is referred to in all religions, constituting their secret or esoteric wisdom. The Kabbala of the Jews, the Christian, Greek, Eleusinian, Gnostic, and Brahminical Mysteries, the Magi of the Persians, and the Sufis among the Mohamedans, while hundreds of writers like Jacob Böhme, William Law, Plato and the Neoplatonists, Pythagoras, Apollonius of Tyana, Paracelsus, Van Helmont, and others, plainly reveal the same truth. Most of these writings are obscure, and many of them consist only of fragments difficult of access and useless without a key to their symbolism. The superstructure known as Freemasonry is founded entirely upon these ancient traditions and landmarks. A large portion of these records and traditions are grouped together and annotated in H. P. Blavatsky's writings, so that they are both accessible and to a considerable extent apprehensible.

The careful and intelligent student of these records and doctrines can easily satisfy himself of the truth of this statement, that, in the last quarter of every century for many millenniums, these doctrines have been brought to the attention of mankind by some teacher competent to understand and interpret them. The present Theosophical movement organized in 1875, therefore, is

one of such revivals of ancient learning, and bids fair to be the most important and vital for many centuries. The needs of the times, the cheap and ready means of publication, as well as certain discoveries in the higher physics and psychology have greatly facilitated the spread of these doctrines. Moreover, the cyclic evolution of the human race at the present time has reached the point of psychic unfoldment where some real knowledge on these subjects becomes necessary to prevent the apotheosis of hypnotism and the debauchery and degradation of the human soul. It was deemed that nothing short of real knowledge on these subjects could prevent such degradation, and herein may be seen the beneficent purpose and the methods of the Society of the Adepts or Mahâtmâs. Often their very existence has been denied, and again they have been criticized for not doing this, or that, or the other thing, as though persons who really possess such knowledge, who know its source, its power, and its use, are not themselves the best judges of where and how to employ and to make it known. Again it has been asked by those ignorant of all these facts and influenced by false and conflicting reports of the personality known as H. P. Blavatsky, "If such Masters exist and possess such knowledge and wish to get a portion of it to the world, why did they not select a different messenger for their work?" This is assuming that those who are totally ignorant of the whole subject, of the essential qualities of the messenger, and everything connected with the whole subject, are nevertheless better qualified to select a messenger and direct his or her course than those who are possessed of complete knowledge of the whole subjects and its requirements, and this is preposterous. We come, therefore, by all these routes to the work itself as the thing of importance, leaving, as far as we choose, both Mahâtmâ and Messenger out of account. This is no new position. From the very beginning it has been said, "If ye believe not me, or him that sent me, believe me then for the very works' sake". That is, leave all else and judge the work solely on its merit; and this very statement prefaces the *Secret Doctrine*.

The mission, therefore, of the T. S. to each individual is very plain. Take just so much of these doctrines as may seem to you desirable, reasonable, just, and true, and leave the rest alone. Judge of the source of these doctrines according to your own standards, but remember that the measure of your progress here depends not upon your desire to learn, not on your selfish motive for personal progress, but upon your unselfish desire to use all knowledge and every power attained, for the uplifting of man and the spiritual progress of the human race. This is the motive

and aim of the Mahâtmâs. Help Them all you can in this, and They will help you. Work for humanity, and the Mahâtmâs will help you to make that work continually more effective and beneficent. Those who turn a deaf ear to such an appeal usually become lukewarm, and often drop out of the Society altogether. They have had their opportunity, and will wait for another incarnation at least before seizing it with practical effect. One very important mission is entrusted to the present T. S. It is to preserve these teachings and to carry them well into the coming twentieth century, so that when at its last quarter another messenger of the Masters appears he can commence on higher ground, with a literature already at hand, and with a humanity already familiar at least with the existence and outline of the Secret Doctrine.

But, it may be asked, what is meant by the "work of humanity" already referred to? It is undoubtedly true that right knowledge is the basis of right action. Ignorance of the nature of man, ignorance in every form, is the cause of sin and sorrow, of disease and death. Therefore true knowledge or enlightenment alone can remove these evils that result from ignorance. This need of the human race to-day for knowledge of the origin, nature, and destiny of man; for knowledge of the nature of the human soul, its powers and the condition of its progress and higher evolution, is regarded as of far more pressing importance than any bodily need. Bodily suffering is of far less importance than the degradation of the soul, though the charitable and really altruistic will always do their best and their most to relieve human misery in every form.

The Theosophical Society has therefore undertaken the task of reviving the lost knowledge of the higher nature of man, to stay the tide of empty ritualism, mammon-worship, and materialism that threatens to engulf the human race; and before the twentieth century is well underway, its mission as an *educator* will be far more appreciated than it is to-day.

It may now be asked, what form is this proposed education to take? What is to be taught, and how are the lessons to be learned?

There are at the present time somewhere between two and three hundred Branches of the T. S. scattered over a great part of the civilized world. The membership of these societies is rapidly increasing, and new Branches are continually being formed. Some of these Branch Societies are large, like that at Stockholm, Sweden, which numbers nearly two hundred members, and like those in London, New York, and some on the Pacific slope. Other Branches are small, numbering hardly a score of persons. These Branches are associations of students, bound by no creed, but often

representing persons of various creeds, and welcoming persons of every variety of religious belief, or of none at all. In other words, the Branches consist of earnest students assenting to the broad principle of Universal Brotherhood as the basis of association and work. If this principle of Brotherhood is held intelligently and sincerely it secures mutual toleration, charity, and helpfulness. It naturally follows that some in every Branch will, owing to education and longer experience, be better posted regarding the subjects studied than are others. It is their duty and privilege to help the younger and less experienced in every possible way to advance in knowledge and usefulness. The first thing taught is the code of ethics or the basis of conduct that directly flows from the principle of Universal Brotherhood. This code of ethics may be summed up in one word—Altruism, and it means continued consideration for and helpfulness of others, and while it is to be exercised in the Society, it is also to reach beyond the Society in every direction and find expression in every possible way. Aside from the general literary exercises, such as readings, essays, and discussions, it is held as specially desirable that a library be formed in every Branch, not only for convenience of reference, but for the use of those who may be unable to procure the necessary books for themselves. These branch libraries should contain the entire literary record of the Society from the first publication to the latest. The subjects studied embrace everything in regard to the origin, nature, progress, and destiny of man; the nature of matter, force, and spirit; the human soul; its nature, embodiments, re-incarnation, and the laws that govern its evolution, liberation, enlightenment, and final triumph over matter, sense, and time. Everything in literature and in life that contributes to the elucidation of these problems is welcomed by the Society. Experiments in hypnotism and psychism are not made or encouraged because of their dangerous character, and because, when the complete philosophy of these subjects is explained, no one cares for more than incidental illustrations, and these can be had on every hand.

When the student has fairly outlined this course of study, and found the evidence that real and exact knowledge may be had on all these points, he usually becomes desirous of studying them in earnest, and of devoting to the study such time and ability as he can command without interfering with the necessary duties of everyday life, for he is taught that nothing can be more untheosophical than the neglect of duties and obligations already assumed. The time that is ordinarily frittered away in amusements and the frivolities of society will be found quite sufficient for study without infringing on the real duties of life, and the real

gain to the individual is very soon apparent. The most efficient means for the apprehension of all these problems has been found to be the establishment of classes for the study of the *Secret Doctrine* and the *Key to Theosophy*, and classes that have thus taken up the study in earnest have invariably made rapid progress and become both intelligent and enthusiastic. It not infrequently happens that really earnest inquirers glance over the *Secret Doctrine* and become discouraged at its apparent magnitude and complexity. When, however, it is taken up thus systematically, and with the assistance of more advanced students, nothing can be more attractive and satisfactory. Such classes have been formed and are in active operation in a very large majority of the local Branches. As students thus make progress from conscientious study, aided by older students, they in turn become teachers and assistants of still younger members, and so help to extend and diffuse the knowledge of these subjects. It is to be remembered that this is a study for the acquirement of real knowledge, not for the propagation of creeds, dogmas, or blind belief. If only knowledge can do away with ignorance, and if ignorance is the cause of misery, then the purpose of these studies becomes apparent. One studies not to *believe* but to *understand*, after which belief becomes a matter of conscience and intelligence only, with every individual. Every member of the Society should be able to give an intelligent explanation of all the doctrines grouped under the Theosophical head, but how can this be done without study, and unless we understand them at least in broad outlines? There is coming now in every community a spirit of intelligent inquiry in regard to Theosophy, and members of the Society ought to be able to give reasons for the faith that is in them, and to help inquirers to more readily apprehend the teachings.

I have thus outlined the mission and methods of the T. S. as an Educator. The doctrines taught must always be left to stand or fall on their own intrinsic merit.

If re-incarnation is true, and I believe that it is, for the reason that no other theory explains the problems and unravels the mystery of life, then one is never too old or too young to earnestly inquire concerning the meaning of life, the nature and laws of the human soul that thus again and again embodies itself in matter.

At the Convention of the T. S. in Boston last April the League of Practical Workers in the T. S. was organized; and several local Branches of this league have already formed and undertaken earnest work among the poorest and most ignorant of communities. The object is in no way to indoctrinate the poorer classes with Theosophical propositions, but to exemplify the principle of

Universal Brotherhood by endeavoring to better the conditions, dispel the gloom of ignorance, and brighten the lives of the poorest and most depraved. During Madame Blavatsky's lifetime the London T. S. organized such a league in the poorest quarter of London, known as the Working-Girls' Club. Another such organization exists in New York City, and the good work already accomplished is not only beneficent but full of pathos. In thus combining practical work with education, the principles of the T. S. become still more apprehensible. Is there not room and need for such an organization in Cincinnati? There is scarcely a man, woman, or child in the British Isles who does not know of the work done by Annie Besant toward lightening the burdens, decreasing the hardships and injustice, and brightening the lives of all English wage-earners, and more particularly with the little children, and doing away with what is known as the sweating system with factory girls. It may thus be seen that while Mrs. Besant's practical Theosophy antedated her acquaintance with H. P. Blavatsky, it received encouragement rather than check from that acquaintance. May we not only hope to see a class for study but also a League of Practical Workers in our Cincinnati T. S.? Many persons are already full of work both personal and social. Others again are willing and able to work if the way is only provided for them to devote such means as are at their disposal to the general good.

I have not undertaken to write a history of the Theosophical movement. I have given only the crudest outline of the Society and its work, while the real teachings of the Society have not been even outlined.

Very few persons seem aware of the fact that there exists a body of doctrines including a complete knowledge of nature and of man, so far as our own solar system is concerned, held in secret by real Initiates for thousands of years. Yet such is undoubtedly the case. An Initiate is one who has advanced along the line of normal evolution beyond the point of the average man or woman, and beyond the highest individual unaided by genuine Initiates. An Initiate, therefore, differs from others precisely as an Emerson, a Parker, or a philanthropist differs from a common laborer; *viz.* in degree of evolution. It is not only a question of learning, being, and doing, but also of innate capacity to learn, to be, and to do. In other words, it is a matter of higher evolution in every department of man's being, physical, moral, intellectual, and spiritual. Moreover, this normal evolution is the birthright of man and the destiny of the human race. A genuine Initiate is therefore an advance guard in human progress, and it is as natural

and reasonable that such persons should exist as that degrees of intelligence and moral worth should distinguish persons in any community. It is the mission of theosophy to show what this progress, evolution, or initiation is, in what it consists, and how it is to be accomplished, and also to outline what knowledge, what truths of nature an Initiate possesses. I have spoken of this knowledge as a "body of doctrines". You may call it a complete philosophy of nature and of life, or a science of existence; for it goes by many names. One thing is very certain; it is not a creed to be dogmatically put forth and blindly believed. There is neither progress nor evolution in that direction. Every statement is to be justified by reason, proved by experience, or tested by use, and accepted or rejected accordingly. If an advanced student or an Initiate makes certain statements drawn from his own experience, we are at perfect liberty to accept or reject the statement, to verify it by our own later experience, or to deny the possibility of any such experience to any one. One's progress toward light and knowledge is not found in blind credulity or in sneering arrogant denial and incredulity, but in a mind clear of prejudice and as open to evidence and the light of truth as are the gates of dawn to the glorious beams of the king of day. Glimpses of the body of doctrines to which I have referred are to be found in many places, traced in many literatures, and embodied in glyph, symbol, allegory, and parable in every age and clime, but nowhere so complete and logical as in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky. They do not rest upon her unsupported statement, but are illustrated and fortified by thousands of references from other authors, and, moreover, there are shown a logical sequence and a coördinate relation between all these statements. It follows, therefore, that the careful student of these doctrines may gather the clues and seize the thread to the labyrinth of ancient wisdom, and so outline and intellectually apprehend the entire system. As a result, he is enabled to direct intelligently his own further progress along the line of higher evolution instead of groping blindly in the dark. In other words, he finds the plan and the specifications of the superstructure he wishes to rear, and he has the unqualified assurance at every step that he is not deceived or led astray, for blind belief or ignorant credulity has no part in his instruction. He is continually admonished to prove all things and hold fast that only which is good. Those who really desire such knowledge and such progress will find it, while the indifferent and the incredulous will wait for the slower evolution, involved in the darkness of ignorance and the bitterness of pain and sorrow. The journey is long, and Nature is patient and long-suffering.

# THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: AMERICAN SECTION.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE, 144 MADISON AVE.

## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

NEW YORK, *August, 1892.*

[Neither the Theosophical Society nor any officer thereof is responsible for the contents of any Paper in this series.]

### A Theosophical Chat.

[Read before the Brooklyn T. S. by H. T. Patterson.]

**B**UT John", said James, who had just returned from an absence of several years, and was chatting cosily with his brother in his bachelor apartments in front of a cosy open fire, "what is Theosophy? And how has it had such an effect on you? Why, you are totally and completely changed—practically another man."

"So you notice the change, do you? Well, I am glad of it. I hope it is so—or rather I can say without egotism I know it is so. For when one has gotten a genuine grip of Theosophy, or rather when it has gotten a grip of him—which is perhaps a more correct way of putting it—he can't help changing, no thanks to himself. He begins a new incarnation, or rather we might say 'is born again'."

"Now see here, my dear fellow", put in James, "you'll have to be a little more explicit, you know. It's all very fine to talk of a new incarnation when Theosophy lays hold of you; but blessed if I know what you mean. And as for quoting scripture,—well, all I've got to say is, you have changed indeed."

"Well then, would you like to have me go into details and explain—or try to explain, for it is no easy job—my position?"

"Of course I would."

"All right. Here goes. But when you begin to grow weary of the subject I wish you would say so; for really I don't want to bore you, and I am apt to be long-winded at times, especially on this subject . . . As for Theosophy, we can look at it in two

ways. First there is the etymological meaning of the word. It is—I think I am correct in saying—divine wisdom. Now I take it that the Society does not use its title because it claims to be the custodian of divine wisdom, but because it is in search of divine wisdom. It has, as a body, no creed, no dogma, no faith. Its members constantly assert this, and its constitution, its by-laws, and the form used in application for membership, all prove this. And yet there is considerable unanimity of opinion amongst its members. Suppose a hundred chemists should form an organization for chemical research, they would naturally all have many beliefs in common, and yet the one hundred and first member might radically differ from them on all these points and still—if the declared object was simply chemical research—be a member in as good standing as the others. So with us, he who joins simply declares his sympathy with the objects of the Society. How he will follow out those objects, or whether he will follow them out at all, rests entirely with himself. These objects are the formation of a nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood; the study of Aryan and other Eastern literatures and religions; the investigating of the hidden forces of nature and the psychic powers latent in man. A very broad field, as you see; and objects to which almost any earnest person could honestly subscribe. For my part, I fail to see why Christian and Jew, Brahmin and Mohamedan, Spiritualist and Materialist cannot all work together harmoniously on this platform. And think of the good to be accomplished thereby! The opinions of mankind are in a state of flux. Never in the scope of any records has history been making so rapidly. Everything seems to have led up to these peculiar conditions, beginning with the discovery of this country. The old barriers are everywhere being broken down. The barriers of prejudice, the barriers of rank, the barriers of religion, the barriers of ignorance; and mankind is formulating its beliefs anew. Now I claim that there is a wide margin between the lowest which mankind may formulate and the highest which it can formulate; and as the history of the coming ages will be influenced for good or for evil by the beliefs now taking shape, it is of the utmost moment that everything possible should be done to exalt these as much as can be. In the present state of rapid change every effort counts for much. It is probably no exaggeration to say that one of these years is worth one hundred ordinary years; and if this is so, no one is exempt from the duty of straining every nerve to do his share well."

"Bravo, mein lieber Bruder! Somebody's cloak must have fallen upon you. Let's see,—I always refer everything back to Virgil,

having forgotten about all I ever learned—but he don't speak of cloaks falling on people. No, I remember,—its back of that—in the old Sunday-School days—but no matter—let's have some more of your ideas. I like their flavor. But it does seem an odd tack for you. Let me see, you were speaking of the times, but what has this to do with the Theosophical Society?"

"Merely this: the Theosophical Society is, to my thinking, the best instrument that there is in existence to make the most of the present conditions. Look at what it has done already. Started less than sixteen years ago without money, without friends, with a most insignificant membership, it to-day has a great many, I do not know how many, although the figures run well up into the hundreds, it has a great many branches in India, besides Ceylon, Japan, England, Ireland, Scotland, France, Sweden, Germany, and between fifty and sixty in this country. There is scarcely any one among civilized peoples who does not know of it, although I must confess the misconceptions about it are laughable. It is, of course, not perfect. But what of that? While human nature is as it is, it could not be otherwise. But it is with us somewhat as with political parties: one must decide whether he will work with parties in existence, start a party of his own, or not work at all. Now I do not want to decry the Society, for I do not think its sins are very heinous, but I merely want to show by analogy that even if it was worse than it is, it still would be, so long as there was none better, the body with which those who really wish to do effective work should affiliate. In it the Christian, the Spiritualist, the Agnostic, the Christian Scientist can advance his views as to Cosmic Philosophy and the best interests of man, and no one has the right to say him nay."

"But, John, ain't you a little off there? From some things which you have said since I came back, it strikes me that you have a most positive set of opinions, and also that you have picked them up in your Theosophical Society."

"That's true enough. I have a very positive set of opinions. So have those with whom I come most in contact; so has Madame Blavatsky, who is really the head and front of the whole movement. But those who join us are quite at liberty either to accept or reject. Nothing is said authoritatively. No one is catechised. No one is supposed to believe in something because someone in whom he has confidence has said it or written it. The reverse is the case. Each one is supposed and expected to form his own philosophy; but the old adage 'Truth is mighty and will prevail' holds now as always, and it's maybe on account of the internal evidence of the truthfulness of these ideas to which you

refer that they are becoming so generally accepted amongst our members."

"Admitted. Then let us take some of the ideas in detail, this of reïncarnation, for instance: what can you say for it?"

"Before I say anything about it, suppose for a moment that we discuss the nature of proof. Not long ago a friend of mine, a man of considerable scientific attainments, made the astonishing statement that all scientific knowledge was positive. And a few minutes before he had also said to another of our little party who had been advancing some ideas gathered from Schopenhauer and the *Upanishads*—for there were several of us together—that these ideas were merely speculative. Then I asked him what was the nature of the proof which enabled science to deal only with positive knowledge. This question he was inclined to evade, but by persistent efforts I succeeded in getting him to admit that this so-called positive knowledge was, roughly speaking, the result of observations made by the senses, aided at times by instruments, and deductions made therefrom by processes of reason either as to the effects which would result from the observed facts, or the causes which accounted for their existence. And the same process I claimed was that followed by the best students in the Theosophical Society. Now coming back to the question of reïncarnation, we have first the statements of philosophers, poets, and other of the world's greatest thinkers through many ages as to their acceptance of the idea. Of course this is no proof; and yet it has a certain weight of testimony. But if you will for a moment consider what is to become of you after death, provided you believe that death is not extinction, you will see how hazy are the conceptions of the vast majority on this matter. Heaven to-day cannot be located upward, nor hell downward, for we know that we inhabit one of the celestial bodies—a very small one—floating in space, and therefore upwards and downwards is entirely relative; the up being sometimes down, and the down sometimes up. To put these places on other planets or some of the Suns, or in interstellar space, does not help matters. Either we are mere bodiless, fancied beings, without a real existence, or we have bodies of some sort, located somewhere. And it is more reasonable to suppose that this somewhere is right here than anywhere else. How at or after death can one possibly get out of the earth-sphere, if the law of gravitation holds? Either his substance must be disintegrated and reassembled elsewhere, or he must live without substance—certainly a peculiar creature—or he must remain right here."

"Now let us look at it in another light. Embryology shows us that in the nine months between conception and birth the human

being reviews the entire past of all life on this globe, beginning with the lowest form. But to review anything, that thing must be remembered. And what is it that remembers this enormous past, which, according to some views now held by prominent physicists, covered in its evolutionary march well nigh one hundred and fifty million years? Is it the one single germ with which conception begins, into which the memory of its ancestors is, in some miraculous way, projected? Or is it that we, living in an ethereal body, work conjointly with the mother to built up and develop that physical body into which we slowly merge our more subtile and ethereal body? If this is so, then the memory is not a projection into the germ from the ancestors, but is truly the recollection of the re-incarnating ego itself."

At this dissertation James seemed a little staggered. He pulled away meditatively at his segar, and gazed long and abstractedly into space. Finally getting himself together, and looking with a little glance of furtive admiration at the earnest and eager face of his brother, he said:

"Perhaps you are right, Jack. I don't know. Although it does seem as though if we had been here so many times before we ought to remember something about it. Now own up, my dear fellow, isn't that something of a poser? Here you try to persuade me that for the last few million of years more or less . . . we'll drop out or put in an odd million of years or two without doing much harm . . . for a few million of years more or less, as I was just saying, we have been going over and over again the same round of existence on this blooming old planet, and yet don't remember a blamed thing about it. Oh, now; that's a little too much to swallow. Pardon me, old chap, but it does stick in my crop just a wee bit."

"And yet it would be more incredible if it were otherwise. Consider—"

"The lilies of the field how they grow."

"No, irreverent and irrelevant jester. Consider for a moment what you were doing two hundred and sixty-seven days ago, and tell me what it was."

"Two hundred and sixty seven days ago! But I do not know when that was."

"Let us take this calendar then and count up. Here we are leven in this month, thirty-one in January, thirty-one in December, thirty in November, thirty-one in October, thirty in September, thirty-one in August, thirty-one in July. Now add that up."

"That makes—let me see, six—twenty-two—two hundred and twenty-six."

"And thirty in June makes two hundred and fifty-six, and eleven more which is May 20th, and we have just two hundred and sixty-seven days ago. Now what were you doing on the 20th of last May."

"Don't know."

"Suppose we go back a little further. What were you doing fifteen years ago on this day of the month?"

"Havn't the most remote conception."

"And when you were three years old, how did you pass the time?"

"Probably as other youngsters of that age do, trying to break my neck, but by some unheard-of series of miracles failing to do so."

"But you don't recollect it yourself, do you?"

"Of course not."

"And yet you think it very strange that you have no memory of the events of preceding incarnations?"

"Yes, that's all very clever, but what's the good of them if we forget all about them?"

"It may be a very merciful thing that we forget. Both you and I, James, I am sorry to say"—and John's voice fell a little, and there was a sad, wistful look in his eyes—"both you and I, James, have some things in our none too distant past that we would both like to have blotted out. And how might it be if we could peer into our past earth-lives? What crimes may we not have been guilty of? What hearts broken? What homes made desolate? What ruin and desolation wrought for others and ourselves? No; if the books must be balanced, if Karma has some grievous things for me which I must endure, I had rather not know in advance, but wait until they come."

"True enough we don't want to know too much about what is ahead of us. But I am floored again. What do you mean by Karma?"

"Ah yes, I keep forgetting how unfamiliar these lines of thought are to most people, and how very familiar to me. But we'd better wait a little before taking up the question of Karma, and give more time to this of reincarnation. You were speaking a moment ago as to its utility, and that very question seems to point to one of the strongest arguments in its favor. What is knowledge? How do we attain it? Plato makes it a recollection or re-collection; a collection again of past experiences; and this is possibly somewhere near the truth. Then, if this is so, having in preceding lives learned our lessons, we in Kama-loca and Devachan get the fruition of them, lose the recollection of them, and come

back with only their essence or the condensation, as it were, of the knowledge thus acquired. This is what is called the aroma or fruit of the sacrifice in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and—".

"Now just hold on one minute, an' it please you. You're getting in too many big words, and will soon have me more muddled even than you had me at first, which may all the holy saints forbid."

"That's a fact, James. But it is no easy task to explain these unusual metaphysical, psychological, and spiritual ideas—these words ain't too big, are they?—with an ordinary vocabulary. You must remember that the English language is largely a commercial one, and does not easily lend itself to subtle thought. But suppose we go back to where the road is smoother. I was speaking of—let me see—reincarnation, and the use of it, that's it. Well, to make a very short story of a very long tale, the whole process may be said to be for the gaining of intelligence through experience. Take the tumble bug: may be I haven't quite the correct name for the creature, but I refer to those little fellows that interested us so much when we were small boys in the country. Do you remember how we used to watch them rolling over and over those round balls about as big as themselves? I'm glad we did not hurt them. We certainly wern't cruel boys. Well, now, don't you suppose that they eventually found out, and pretty positively too, that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points? And take the ant carrying its food home, didn't it learn the same thing? And the bee too? And if the evolutionary theory is correct, does it not seem reasonable that the retention of this knowledge, mind you, not the recollection of the experiences by which the knowledge was attained, but the retention of this knowledge, is that which causes us to say that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points, and dub it an axiomatic truth? What otherwise are axiomatic truths? If we are created beings and there is a personal God, it may be that he instilled axiomatic truths into us when he put us together. But if we have evolved, and if there is a vital germ within, and there must be to make the evolutionary hypothesis complete, then the fact that we have within the storehouse of our being such an accumulation of facts, call them axiomatic truths or what you will, can best be accounted for, it seems to me, by the theory that our life covers a long span in the past of which we now have no memory. And if we had a past, there are many reasons why it was on this earth rather than elsewhere. But leaving the deeper philosophy and going into individual experiences, we find no inconsiderable weight of testimony tending to establish the same point. For my own part, I have

never investigated any of these cases, partly from lack of opportunity, but more from lack of interest. Phenomena do not greatly interest me. It is more the utter reasonableness of the thing and my own inner experiences which have convinced me, although I do not even say 'I know', but only that the ideas which I have been expounding are to me the most plausible which have ever presented themselves to me. But to go back to the question of phenomena, there has, amongst many others, one case been told to me that, if true, would be almost positive proof of re-incarnation. The story runs about thus: A lady and her little boy not long ago were walking in the streets of New Orleans, when the boy suddenly stopped in front of a strange house and begged to be allowed to go in, because, as he said, he used to live there. He insisted, and told all about the inside of the house, his old nurse, etc., etc. Finally to pacify him his mother yielded, and was amazed to find everything as he described it, and that a boy had died there shortly before the birth of her own child. Of course thought-transference, seeing in the astral light, or some analogous process might account for this; but with all the similar cases constantly coming to our ears there would seem to be something in it."

"Accepting for the time being that you have established the correctness of your theory, what part does sex play in it? That is, were those of us who are now men always men, or were we once women?"

"On that subject I have been very much at sea. Sometimes it seems as though, if we are to learn our lessons thoroughly, we must be testing life first as male, then as female; perhaps not with a regular alternation, but yet with a sort of balance eventually established as to the length of time we have been one and the length of time we have been the other. Again, when one notices how the youth resembles the woman—"

"Indeed I do. Will you ever forget our private theatricals in the old college days? I tell you, you were quite a stunner, John. Just too, too—Well, well, well, it don't seem so long ago. Do you remember when you took the part of—oh! I forget the name—but you came out in evening dress with a train I don't know how many yards long, and wore one of Susie's lace sacques to conceal your masculine neck and arms, for they did give you away, and—"

And so the two went on, calling up reminiscences of by-gone days, until the fire had burned low and the approaching small hours warned them that it was time to stop.

# THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: AMERICAN SECTION.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE, 144 MADISON AVE.

## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

NEW YORK, *September, 1892.*

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### Intuition.

*[A Paper read before the Aryan T. S. by Alexander Fullerton.]*

**I**N our previous discussions upon "Intuition" we have seen that the derivation of the word shows its meaning to be "a looking into", an immediate perception, thus distinguishing it from those other modes of sight which imply mediate or indirect knowledge. Two questions at once arise: What are the media with which intuition dispenses, and How shall we know when they have been dispensed with and the man is gazing directly on reality? These are not easy questions to answer, and I think we can do no more than indicate possibilities.

Ordinary human judgment is reached through a balancing of considerations which are supplied by reason and experience. When there comes before the mind a matter as to which opinion is to be formed, we instinctively summon up the arguments, *pro* and *con*, that bear thereon, and look back to see if any analogous case has happened in our lives, and what clue its outcome gives to fact about others. If, for example, we are invited to join a Society for the reform of some abuse in political or civic affairs, certain queries at once arise. Is the abuse of enough importance to justify a distinct organization for its correction; can it best be reached by public sentiment or by legislation: are the means proposed such as are likely to produce reform without exciting collateral evils as bad as the original; are the projectors men whose characters and reputations guarantee that the purpose is sincere and not a disguise for some personal gain? Satisfied upon these points, we then review the past to ascertain what has been the fate of similar organizations: whether they have endured for any

time, whether their purpose has been dulled or deflected, whether the community endorsed them, whether they in fact accomplished to any degree what they attempted. A careful man goes over all these questions, and his opinion is shaped according to the results disclosed.

Now it is evident that these results are disclosed through the exercise of two faculties—reason and memory, and also that the shaping of his opinion upon them is the outcome of such judgment as he is able to use. If his reason was flawless, his memory accurate, and his judgment sound, that outcome would have the highest validity,—not, indeed, absolute inerrancy, for there might have been elements in the case of which he had never heard and could not therefore use, but certainly unerring up to that point.

The great practical difficulty is, however, that not one of these three conditions exists. No man has perfect reasoning power, no man's memory is exhaustive, and no man's judgment is precise. The original faculty, and the tools it is obliged to use, are all defective, and hence nothing more than an approximation to truth in their use is practicable.

If this be so in the affairs of secular life, affairs which have a tangible character and may, so to speak, be handled and felt, much more must it be so in more subtle and ethereal regions. Conscience is a case in point. This has to do with moral questions, questions of right and wrong, and though it might seem that conscience was a certain guide, we know very well that it is constantly confused with self-will, that it has sanctioned in some ages and nations practices which are abhorrent to those later on, and that it changes in individuals as their convictions are modified by education and thought. We have all heard the story of the negro deacon who constantly opposed projects by his fellow church-members on the ground that his conscience was against them. After a while some suspicion gained ground as to the nature of this conscientiousness, and another deacon asked him what he meant by his conscience. "Whenever you fellows get after me and bore me," said he, "I feel something rising up within me which says 'I wont, I wont, I wont!'" We read of the ancient Hebrews that, when victorious over a neighboring nation, it was a matter of religious duty to massacre all the grown men, the wives, and the widows, and to parcel out the virgins among the conquerors, reserving a certain proportion for Jehovah himself. Those of us who have gone through any process of evolution in religious convictions know how conscience has shifted its area from prescriptions to principles, from arbitrary dicta to rational guidance; how things, especially in regard to Sunday, which once seemed

sinful are now perceived to be innocent, and how others, especially in regard to selfishness, which once seemed permissible are now felt to be noxious. Conscience, therefore, unenlightened, untrained, is not a final authority, and evidently needs adjustment by the lower faculty of reason before it can be trusted to as safe.

If clear insight is now impossible in the region either of secular affairs or of moral problems, evidently it can only come about in one of two ways,—either existing faculties must be greatly refined and strengthened, or an entirely different faculty must be employed. That the former will anyhow occur can hardly be doubted. As humanity ascends the upward arc, it is but reasonable to suppose that its powers will in every quarter expand. Memory will be more comprehensive, reason more vigorous, judgment more nice. Still, whatever degree of excellence they may reach, they must always be tools, instruments of the real man which he employs in his search for Truth. Is he always to depend on instruments, however fine, to be subjected to media, however purified? Is it not more reasonable to suppose that these will in time be discarded because needless, and that directly, immediately, without interventions, he may gaze upon and into fact?

This is the contention of Theosophy. It holds that the soul possesses the power of intuition, as yet potentially, only in the germ, but that ultimately this will be its normal method of inspecting truth. It holds that the finer regions can only thus be entered, that argument is too coarse and clumsy, too slow and circuitous, for such a purpose, that all media but interpose obstructions to immediate cognition. It holds that there is an "eye of Siva" which gazes on supersensual topics as truly as does the bodily eye on physical objects, but far more piercingly and accurately, perceiving their inner nature and relations, sensing them in their reality as does God. And it is this eye, this intuitive organ, which it desires and predicts shall be opened in true Theosophists.

Now comes the question, How shall we know that media have been indeed dispensed with and that we are gazing on reality? Of course an obvious mark is that the perception is instantaneous, not reached through any process or conscious effort, but immediate, as when we see an object before us. Reason does not conduct to a judgment intuitively formed, though it may afterwards affirm and verify it. At once, without hesitation or deliberation, we feel within us that such and such a thing is true or false. There is an analogy in the case of tact. A tactful person instantly realizes that a topic is infelicitous or a policy unwise, that conversation or arrangements need change, and senses the way to bring

it about. Not till afterwards does he go over the Why and the How. Nor is it even an idea coming, as it were, from without and securing acquiescence within: rather is it an interior perception which at once and without analysis seizes the nature of that before it. Tact is really a form of intuition on a lower plane.

Still, we may not say that instantaneity is the touch-stone for intuition. Sometimes a proposition is repelled from the mind at the moment of its presentation because it conflicts with some prejudice or prepossession of which at the time we are unconscious, and the proposition is afterwards adopted when it is seen to be reasonable and to be opposed only by that prejudice. Nor will it do to say that that is intuition which instantaneously furnishes judgments which reason subsequently approves, for that would be to condition the higher faculty on the lower, and then intuition could never supplant and survive reason. Nor will it do to say that intuition concerns itself only with the highest class of truths, those of the soul or spirit, leaving others to the action of minor powers, for it is not clear that this is the essential distinction, and still less is it clear that these classes can be rigidly discriminated, since here, as elsewhere in Nature, various departments are not sharply separated, but shade off into each other by often imperceptible degrees. Nor will it do to say that interior assurance is the test of intuition, for, as was shown in one of the papers read to us, equal assurance has been felt as to contradictory propositions, and this too in the same person at different epochs.

I do not see how it is possible for us at our present stage to possess ourselves of any means of determination whether intuition is really being used, or how it may with certainty be distinguished from finer reason, or what is its range as to topics. We may be conscious of keener susceptibility to higher impulses and thoughts, and we may have a vague certitude that our inner being is less inert and more sensitive, but we can hardly formulate these experiences, name them, give them an objective validity. Yet if such positiveness is impracticable, we are not without some solid fact arrived at by another route.

It has often been pointed out that, as we become proficient in processes of body or mind, they are more and more performed unconsciously, without attention or thought. This is true of the most common physical acts in life, of which walking is one of the best examples, and true also of mental acts, reading being an illustration. A quick and intelligent reader will seize in a moment the idea contained in a paragraph. Now not only has the eye taken in every letter and every word, though without having done so purposely, but the mind has drawn from those words the suc-

cessive thoughts, and has combined them into one definite idea. Without being aware of any process, the man has really performed one of much complexity, and has done so because long practise has brought about a state of things in which the lower functions have learned to work automatically, and thus have released the next higher grade for better service, and then those of that grade, becoming proficient in their duty, have freed a still loftier grade in turn. The culmination, in the matter we are considering, is when a glance at several printed lines on a page produces instantaneously a definite conception in the mind. There is a physical act and there is a thought, but the intervening process is imperceptible.

Take another fact. Right-minded men do not dilly-dally with conscience or seek compromises by which they can practice some wrong and yet escape self-reproach. They yield promptly and preferably to the dictum conscience gives. In time it acts freely and spontaneously, the habit of moral insight and moral obedience is formed, duty becomes part of the nature. This result means two things: first, that the clogs or hindrances to conscience, the self-interests which befog and hamper it, have been steadily dispelled or broken down, and higher influences allowed their perfect ingress; second, that the encouragement it has received has quickened its action till that has become instantaneous. Percipience of right is immediate.

Let, now, these two illustrations be combined, and then note their outcome. Will it not be something like this,—that, as we ascend to higher departments in the constitution of man, the movements which have acquired perfectness disappear from consciousness, that perception takes the place of process, and that this perception is direct. Now this is intuition.

Of course such line of thought does not conduct to a definition, nor does it declare whether intuition is wholly a spiritual faculty and disconnected utterly from the region of mind, nor does it give tests whereby we may determine whether a conviction has come intuitively. All it does is to indicate the nature of that course by which an evolving humanity advances to higher planes, and to infer the future from the past. If inferior faculties drop out of sight as their mission is fulfilled, others will doubtless do so; if finer powers become more prominent and active, further ones will probably emerge from present darkness and displace their predecessors; if perception of truth shows a tendency to dispense with media as evolution proceeds, there is reason to believe that it will finally be rid of them altogether. In short, intuition is to be the substitute for all cruder means to knowledge.

How is it possible for us to as yet assert much more than this? That a conviction appears perfectly clear, that it commands entire assent and seems to have no counter-side, proves nothing, for the most unhesitating certainties have been often shown wholly erroneous. That it is reached at a jump proves no more, and for the same reason. That it appears to have dispensed, however unconsciously, with mediate apparatus is only an appearance. Until a whole section of our complex being is scientifically developed, there would seem no assurance that the "eye of Siva" has really opened, the intuitive faculty really functioned. Meantime we can but abate the deflections which vitiate judgment, and so clarify all mental sight that in purity, quickness, and precision it shall prepare for that higher vision when we shall know even as also we are known.

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### Dreams.

*[Abstract of an address delivered before the Aryan T. S., New York, by Claude F. Wright, of the Blavatsky Lodge of London.]*

**T**O the Supreme the three modes of Being—waking, dreaming, and trance—are not", said the ancient Brahmans, thus showing that those hoary philosophers not only believed in other states of existence besides the mere physical or waking (yagrata), but also regarded the same as "modes of being". Now-a-days most of us believe in dreams; few persons, however, admit their importance, or the possibility of deriving a philosophy from a study of them, because they are not regarded as having any real basis or containing any truths. They are treated rather as accidental or abnormal conditions which should be disregarded and brushed aside by every sane man.

But the ancient Hindûs were not alone in their belief. All the great nations of the past—Egypt, China, and so forth—demonstrated the importance of the study both of the conditions of dreaming and of trance. They found such studies necessary in order to fully understand the self. They indeed considered true dreaming, or perception on the plane of consciousness next removed from our own, as really a more vivid and truer existence than this one. But such dreams certainly differed from the idle, sleepy visions of the civilized pleasure-seeker born of present-day little or no reflective consciousness, and consequently in them the cerebrum is very small. It can only act when the soul is there to stimulate and train it. Any other action in it must be regarded as reflex, the involuntary reawakening of previous impressions.

In sleep, the soul being withdrawn, the cerebrum consequently

humanity. They were vivid and potent. Life was with them regarded only as a state of consciousness, lasting only so long as was necessary for the experience of the ego. Dreams were the higher perceptions of this life.

As the Wisdom-Religion of old has undergone its gradual unfolding in modern times, a partial philosophy of dreams has arisen. And we hear such numerous cases of prophetic visions, and the belief in such has become so strong among so many persons, that the necessity of a true explanation of these must be apparent. Theosophy in this as in all other things gives what seems to be the only efficient explanation.

Theosophy speaks of two souls in every human being—an immortal and a mortal. The mortal is the lower aspect or reflection of the immortal, and lasts only for the period of life here, returning then to unite with its immortal self and enjoy heavenly rest. The lower mortal half and transient self is the ego—the “I am I”—of mortal man. It is really one with its higher ego, but, being bound in the body, it is so colored with the passions and desires of that body as to fancy itself entirely separate from its other self and alone. Conversely, freedom from passion and desire asserts immediately the immortality of the human soul. Normal sleep is the loosening of the bonds of passion—the body becomes passive, and useless as an instrument—and therefore the ego can, if it so desires, rebecome one with its god during sleep. Normally this takes place when sleep comes about. The memory of such bliss and the knowledge and experience consequent on such are, however, the lot of very few people on waking. The reason is not far to seek. The brain is the organ of memory. In the animal it will reflect in its deeps only things pertaining to this plane of existence. But man has a brain-structure fitting the reception of higher phases of existence. Nevertheless man is animal so long as he has not permitted the soul to assert itself. This few have done or are doing. They live from day to day the life of higher animals, making no attempt to fan into flame the divine spark which smoulders in their brain. Consequently that part of their cerebral structure capable of understanding the higher science and perceiving the true and fuller life remains dormant—even becomes atrophied in time. Hence few dream pure and true dreams.

There are two parts of the brain recognized by Phrenology as performing different functions in man. One—the cerebrum, lying in the front part of the head, and having to do with the intellectual, reflective, and moral qualities: the other—the cerebellum, lying below, and dominating the animal nature. The animals have

ceases to function; but the animal instincts—the cerebellum—remain awake and even active. The only way by which external impressions can be carried to the brain during normal sleep is through the cerebellum; therefore most people have chaotic, confused, and instinctual dreams, if they dream at all. Before, however, such can be remembered they must have lodged themselves in the cerebrum, but as the cerebrum is unconscious during sleep, it is easy to see that therefore all dreams take place at the moment of awakening. The cerebellum has been all night radiating sensual desires and feelings: these infect the cerebrum, and when the latter is called into activity at the movement of the soul's return, it finds its registry a long, confused dream,—a mixture of its own reflection during the day, the senses and sights it has registered in the past, and the semi-conveyed impressions of the cerebellum. All this happens at the second of awakening. To put it briefly: the mind-brain ceases action during sleep; the instinctual brain, on the other hand, never ceases functioning. But when awake, its functions are all lost in those of the cerebrum. The work of the occultist or of anyone who would remember the true dreams of the soul—apart from the chaotic instincts of the body—is to train his brain to separate these impressions. His work is dual. First he has when awake to learn how to keep separate the physical, instinctual desires from his mind, so as not, as it were, to mix the two, but to allow each its sphere of action. Secondly, he has to train the mind to understand metaphysical thought and lofty aspirations. The accomplishment of the first will, if persevered in, become normal action and act during sleep, and he will not have his mind filled during the night with confused sensuous perceptions; while that of the other will enable the soul to register any higher impressions received during sleep. Then when it returns the waking mortal will find his mind full of a long dream, not of chaotic, confused thoughts radiated from the animal man, but of lofty knowledge. For the soul in sleep becomes possessed of knowledge far truer than during the waking state, and if the mind can be trained to receive such it becomes the property of the human being.

Thus we find a potent answer to questioners on Theosophy who wish to know the use of all our studies about re-incarnation, rounds, and principles, and so forth. These are not perhaps at first of much help, as they cannot be *proved* to the mind, although their reasonableness may assert itself. But if persisted in they serve to train the mind in mystic thought, enabling it in time to reflect the higher perceptions of the soul.

# THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: AMERICAN SECTION.

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## DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

[Neither the Theosophical Society nor any officer thereof is responsible for the contents of any Paper in this series.]

### A Theosophical Chat.

[Continuation of Branch Paper No. 26.]

**I**T was exactly half after eight o'clock as John drew on his gloves and said to James: "What are your plans for the day?"

"I don't know," responded James; "how would you like to try a Turkish bath this afternoon?"

"All right. That's to the queen's taste, exactly."

At eight the two brothers, having had their baths, lay back blinking at the blaze of the logs, as they watched the curl of the smoke from their cigars.

"Now, Jack, I am ready for lesson number two", said James. "I know all about re-incarnation from A to Izzard, and am ready to absorb Karma like a squeezed sponge."

"Don't you think you've had enough?" said John.

"Enough? No!"

"But it's not easy to begin to order. What do you want to know?"

"What do I want to know? Why everything about Karma, of course."

"You don't mind my finishing this mint, I suppose?"

"The gods forbid!"

"Let me see? You want to know something about karma? In 'The Mascot' the king reads 'A mascot is a mascot'; a very lucid definition. And so Karma is Karma. Col. Olcott, the President of the Theosophical Society, says 'Karma is the law of ethical causation'. That's all very well when you know what Karma is,

but, until you do, it don't throw a vast deal of light on the subject. Sometimes it has seemed to me as though the word at root meant nearly the same as character; and yet I know that's no where near the mark. Neither can it lightly be passed over as simply cause and effect. Maybe, to understand it, it will be necessary to speak of the different principles in man. And yet that brings up another troublesome question. The fact is that the nature of the universe, the nature of man, and man's place in the universe is a subject of considerable proportions; and it is exceedingly difficult to explain one's conceptions of a part only, if one's conceptions are worth anything. However, by accepting certain premises, which I think can later be proven correct, I may be able to make my notions understandable. Let us admit, to start with, that man has an immortal nature and a mortal body. If this is true, he must exist on two planes, the material, and the immaterial or supersensuous. By his immortal nature I do not mean anything vague and imaginary, for it seems to me as though the axiom 'no being without body' is correct, but the immortal part, though substantial, is yet not material, as we know matter. Now, according to the belief of many, man dies and then sooner or later goes to Heaven or Hades—or perhaps all go to Heaven, it is not important for the argument how this is settled, but it is important to bear in mind that they think that he does not come back here. This belief coupled with that of vicarious atonement—and I don't mean to attack Christianity, for much of it appeals to me, but only the misconceptions of the churches as to the original teachings—this belief, coupled with that of vicarious atonement, as I was saying, leads the people to suppose that we can avoid the payment of our debts by dying. So ingrained has this idea become, even into every fiber of our being, that even you, skeptic as you are, must admit that you find it constantly cropping up; and I, though such a thought is utterly foreign to my philosophy, am aware that it tinctures my innermost self. But Karma precludes such conceptions. According to it every cause must not only produce its effects, but sooner or later the effects must react on the causes, and on the plane on which they were set in operation. That is, if A. kills B. and then himself, he cannot thus escape the consequences of what he has done, but must take them—and on this earth too. It is not sufficient to suppose that he reaps the results in the bad place, nor that by any act of faith and repentance before dying he escapes them altogether, but, according to this doctrine, each account is sooner or later balanced in some subsequent incarnation on its own proper plane."

"But why is it not sufficient that the account should be squared

up in Heaven or Hell?" queried James, "admitting that there are such places, which I don't."

"Because man's higher and lower natures each have a consciousness of their own, and it is not right that one should pay the penalty of the other."

"Oh, Come; Come; Do draw it a little milder; I can't admit that even for the sake of argument."

"Nevertheless it's most reasonable. In the first place, admitting that the lower and the higher natures exist—which I do not forget we do for the present only through your courtesy—and bearing in mind that in the scientific world there is a general consensus of opinion to the effect that all things have some measure of consciousness, life, and intelligence, it follows that each of these natures, the higher and the lower, following the general principle, must have its share of consciousness, life, and intelligence; and, if it has, the responsibility for its acts to a certain extent lies with itself, and it is but fair that it should take the consequences which belong to it. Of course, if there is no such thing as universal justice, then it may happen that sometimes the reward or punishment, or better say karmic effects, do not fall where they belong. But if one admits of one iota of chance in the universal scheme, then the invariableness of the laws of gravity, correlation of force, etc., is knocked in the head; and it would be difficult, I think, for you to meet any real thinker who would consider such a proposition."

"But do you mean to tell me that the physical part of us has an independent volition?"

"Certainly."

"Aren't you jesting?"

"Not in the least, my dear fellow. A human being is more composite than you dream of. Each atom, each molecule, each cell in the body is alive, active, and aggressive. There is in our small anatomies mineral, vegetable, and animal life, all these functioning at the same time with a harmony scarcely more marvellous than its intricacy. Sometimes there is a loss of balance, and then we say we are ill. But the supervisor is always at hand to readjust, if possible. By the supervisor—I see you look surprised—I mean the higher ego. It may be this that is symbolized in the pyramid with the eye at its apex. The lives of atoms being the base, the lives of molecules forming a higher stratum, then still higher coming the mineral, vegetable, and animal lives, until at the apex we have the human life. Why is it not possible that through the long past we have slowly risen from one grade to another, our consciousness constantly enlarging its limits of per-

ception until we are where we are now; this itself, however, being not the summit. If this is so, why may we not now be reaping as we then sowed? And this brings me back to my text—Karma. Let us picture to ourselves a man mad with rage and longing to kill. He does it. Why? Because there lurks in his heart the feeling that he will not have to pay the penalty. Because human law is uncertain, and so far as another world is concerned he does not really and fully believe in it. But suppose a gallows is built, and the rope is hanging with the noose at its end, and the black cap and the drop ready, and he has seen men hung before, and realizes the agony, and then suppose that he is given permission to take the life he is longing for, but also made to understand that so soon as he has, he himself will be hung. Will he or will he not take advantage of the opportunity? Most certainly not. Now the effect of an acceptance of the doctrine of Karma is similar. For as the idea grows on one—and it will grow—that we must even-up our scores right here on earth, sooner or later, then the desire to do wrong things is constantly checked by an ever-deepening sense of the inevitability of the reckoning. If everyone thought in this way, even the most ignorant,—for it is comprehensible by every one,—the amount of crime would be enormously lessened."

"Yes, the utility of the thing is apparent enough, but that doesn't prove it."

"Neither it does. And yet that theory or hypothesis which leads to general welfare is more worthy of consideration than another which if held would cause disorganization, misery, and suffering. As I said before, we must postulate much without warrant unless we discuss our scheme *en masse*, which is not feasible. You have probably forgotten that it was agreed that we should admit that man had different principles; that he was, as it were, a composite being—not a unit. Then I simply hinted at a line of argument which I might follow out to show the reign of law or absolute justice, and also another line of argument to show that each part of the composite entity had a certain measure of responsibility. If we should adopt the Socratic method of discussion, I think that I might persuade you that these positions of mine are not only defensible, but that from them it is easy to make some very vigorous attacks on many current—shall I say 'misconceptions'?"

"It is all very well to talk of proving by the Socratic method, but Clark was telling you the other evening that anything could be proven that way, and I think he's right. See how a good lawyer will wind up a witness."

"Not so easy as you think, old chap. Just try it sometime when you have a chance. You'll find you've got to know exactly your objective point, and also be quite ready to change your tactics,—very often without much deliberation. But the worst of it is that you won't find any one who will really answer your questions. They'll answer some other question, they'll answer too much, they'll pretend not to understand anything, to avoid being slowly driven into a corner. Then you have to repeat, to insist upon direct answers, to refuse to consider any part that is not really a response, and to—but let's drop it. Here comes Murray, and you might as well talk Choctaw to him as this kind of thing. Halloa, Murray. How are you? My brother James. James, my friend Murray."

After acknowledging the introduction and greeting John, Murray took a vacant chair which John offered him, and, having often heard of James, soon had him started on a long account of his travels. So far that evening Karma and Reincarnation were dropped.

The subject by no means rested there. James was interested. Both he and John were not only brighter than the average clubman, but they were also naturally religious. Born of kindly, energetic, and honest parents; brought up in their early days to believe in the Bible as divinely inspired; themselves well-meaning at core, though with that surface of skepticism which the congealing influence of materialism and agnosticism inevitably forms; they had that readiness to respond to truth, if rationally presented, characteristic of all who are not innately bad. John had long since perceived the cogency of the arguments supporting the ideas now, to such an extent, engrossing him. They had not yet affected his life much, to be sure; but they were being rapidly assimilated, and perhaps had already brought about a change. He was, at any rate, considering important steps, by no means disconnected from an intention of a discontinuance of some questionable habits.

It happened that a few evenings after the talk at the club, the brothers were again seated together in John's rather luxurious bachelor apartment. They were as usual comfortably smoking. Presently they quite unintentionally drifted back to the subject so summarily interrupted before, and James said "John, do you know, I really like to talk about your Theosophical theories; or rather, I should say, I like to hear you talk about them, so don't avoid the subject, old man. If you give me too much I'll kick like a Texas steer; but, until I do, let yourself out to your heart's content. Will you?"

"Will I? Why, of course. Why not? You see how the thing's

taken hold of me, and I will be only too pleased at having an intelligent audience, even if it is only an audience of one. Good listeners are not abundant. In fact most people are a bore. They are so stupid and so superficial; I don't mean about my fad, but about anything—everything. It's just the same on their own favorite theme. Talk political economy to the man whose hobby is politics. Why, bless you, he doesn't know the first principles, not he. He can tell about this, that, or the other candidate; give you any amount of personal tit-tat about Jones, Smith, or Robinson who is running for office; yet excitedly lose his temper, and generally show his utter ignorance. The same's true in every line. The sporting man doesn't, when you come to fine points, know any of the niceties about horses. No more does the doctor understand the rationale of medicine, nor the store-keeper the broad principles of commerce. I tell you it's a superficial, thoughtless, pretentious age. A smattering of this, that, and the other; a crazy notion on the part of some to be cultured—how I dislike the word; a hurrying and scurrying after money, music, art, literature, psychism, heaven knows what; and heaven only knows when it will come to an end. If you broach any of the broad questions of existence you are nine times out of ten, yes, nine-hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand, hauled up short with a question as to whether you believe in God; what you really think of God. 'Just tell me in a few words, you know', they'll say to you. As though this vast universe and its cause could be explained as you would describe the making of a new dish, the decoction of the latest drink, or the proper manner of tying a scarf. How can a man, I'd like to know, tell whether he does or doesn't believe in God if he isn't permitted to explain his view as to what God is. I do get so tired of it. And then people think you have some fine-spun metaphysical system that's all very well to theorize about, but which has nothing to do with every-day life. As though it didn't make some difference whether or not we believed we could escape from the results of all our ill deeds by believing at the last moment something about a certain person, supposed to have existed about two thousand years ago, or whether we were convinced that there was no escaping from the penalty of every thought, word, and deed. Impracticable? Nonsense? It is the most practicable theory I've ever heard; and if universally accepted would revolutionize mankind."

"How about the Hindûs? Don't they believe it? and are they so much more highly civilized than we?"

"The Hindûs? How do I know what they believe? I take it for granted that the average Hindû is about as ignorant as our

average street-sweeper, and knows about as much about reïncarnation. Reïncarnation? Why I don't believe one of them would step on a cockroach for fear of smashing his grandmother."

And they both laughed.

"But, after all, isn't there a grain of truth in the feeling that the thing will not do for the masses? Can ordinary people take hold of your scheme? Isn't it in reality too much of a scheme? Perhaps well enough for a few brainy people, but too high-flown for every-day affairs. Of what use is it to a laboring man, too tired, too untrained to take hold of anything but a few simple truths?"

"Of what use? I'll tell you of what use, and I know exactly what I'm talking about. I took supper one evening with some poor people, Miss Comstock and I. We had been invited. You see she's very much among them. Does ever so much for them. Well, we sat down to supper. What do you think we had? Rye-bread, hard-boiled eggs, coffee, and radishes. Two knives, one for bread and one for butter, no plates, nothing but a cup and saucer and pewter spoon apiece. So you'll get on to the fact they were not enormously wealthy people. To tell the truth, the woman—it was a man and his wife we were visiting, Russian Jews—couldn't read or write. But you would have opened your eyes to see how bright they were. You can't fool that kind of people much. Well, after a while, as a kind of a feeler, I said 'Do you ever go to any of McGlynn's lectures, or belong to any of these brotherhoods, or anything of that kind?' 'Don't belong to any brotherhood', he replied, 'but go to a lecture once in a while.' Don't you like the idea of brotherhood? I asked. 'Oh yes, I like the idea of brotherhood well enough', he answered, 'but what good is it going to do me?' 'Why not?' 'Why not? Why s'pose we should get things running pretty well, I won't be here. I ain't going to get much good out of it.' 'But suppose you should come back?' 'S'pose I should come back? But I ain't going to come back'. 'How do you know you're not going to come back?' 'How do I know I'm not going to come back? Why, if people came back they'd remember something about it.' 'Are you so sure of that? Here's your baby. Does she know anything about what happened to her yesterday, or the day before, or last week, or last month? Not a bit. And yet she was alive yesterday, and the day before, and so on.' 'Well, s'pose we did come back, what good would it do?' 'Just this. Each time we come here we learn a little more, just as the baby does. And because we don't remember it, it doesn't follow that we haven't been here before, any more than the baby's not remembering proves she wasn't

here yesterday. Then again', I went on, seeing I had his attention, 'if you work for brotherhood and come back you do get some benefit for what you've done!' 'Well, when I lay down I want to stay there. I don't want to have to get up again,' said his wife. 'True enough,' I said, 'and when your baby goes to bed it doesn't want to get up; but when morning comes it's different. The same with you. When you lie down and die you don't want to come right back again, but after years have passed I guess you'll get a little tired of lying still and doing nothing, and'll be glad enough to start in again. Then another thing: I believe you and your husband will come back together. Just how this happens I don't know. But let me tell you a little story. A man in Brooklyn had two beautiful butterflies—they came from South America. There were no more like them in this country. One of them—it was a female—he put in a glass case on top of the fence in his yard. The other, the male, he took to Jersey City and let it loose. A few hours afterwards it was hovering around its mate in the glass case. How did it get there? I can't tell you. I can only tell you it is a fact. And so I can't tell you how you and your husband will find each other when you come back. But I think you will find each other. And then here is another thing. Some people are rich now; some poor. What makes them rich? Perhaps they are getting what is owing to them from the last time. Maybe then they were like you now. Maybe they worked hard; were honest, but didn't get much for it then. But now if they don't help other people there won't be anything owing to them when they come back again, and then they'll have to take their turn at being poor.' All this pleased them mightily, and so, you see, I got in some crude notions of Karma, Reincarnation, and Universal Brotherhood. The trouble usually is, we don't half grasp the ideas ourselves, and so can't explain them, especially to uneducated people, for it requires the same skill and mastery of a subject to do this as to impart knowledge to children. But the poor really want this kind of thing. They're hungry for it. It doesn't make any difference whether they are Jew, Christian, or what not, they are all equally skeptical to-day. But they are also ready to take the truth if presented in the right way."

"I give in," yawned James. "I'm ready to acknowledge your line of thought has a more practical trend than I supposed. Didn't know you'd been missionizing. Heigh-ho! Half past eleven. I'm going to turn in. Good night."

"Good night", replied John, and after watching the retreating figure of his brother he sat a long time gazing intently into the embers with his chin in his palms and his elbows on his knees.